

# Good practices in English Language Teaching (ELT)

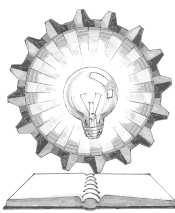


This volume is the result of a research project carried out in 2023 at the Universidad Nacional del Ecuador entitled “Successful practices in English teaching and linguistic and pedagogical formation of pre-service English teachers in PINE and the Language Centre”. The members of the research project aimed to identify the most successful practices that were being implemented in English lessons in order to both learn from each other to improve our own practice and also to aid the wider ELT community by disseminating these practices.

Inside this volume you will find a wealth of useful tips and strategies to improve your own classroom teaching. Whether you need help with effective classroom management or new ideas on how to incorporate technology into your English lesson, this guide will be useful for you with step-by-step instructions on how to implement tried and tested ideas.

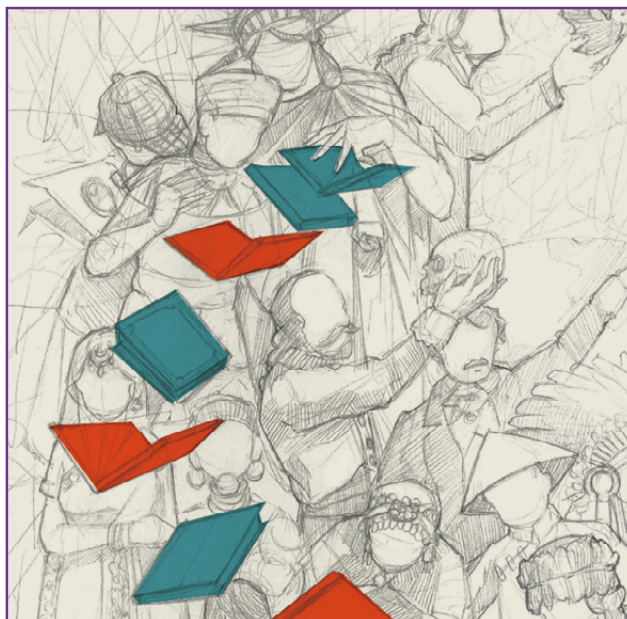
**Good practices in  
English Language  
Teaching (ELT)**





Cartillas Pedagógicas  
COLECCIÓN UNAE

# Good practices in English Language Teaching (ELT)



Agnes Orosz, Uvaldo Recino, Julia Sevy, Tania Cajamarca, Andrea Ávila, Heidy Matute,  
Tania Rodas, Janina Quito, Verónica Herrera, Helen Moreira, Martha Lara

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## Introduction

This volume is the result of a research project carried out in 2023 at the Universidad Nacional de Educación (UNAE) entitled “Successful practices in English teaching and linguistic and pedagogical formation of pre-service English teachers in PINE and the Language Centre at the National University of Education”.

The members of the research project aimed to identify the most successful practices that were being implemented in English lessons at UNAE in order to both learn from each other to improve our own practice and also to aid the wider English Language Teaching (ELT) community by disseminating these practices.

The data collection included classroom observations and student questionnaires and interviews. The strategies mentioned in the chapters are the outcomes of an action research process derived from the research project.

They have also been disseminated in journal articles, conference presentations and publications and trialed and implemented in the workshop: “Successful Practices in ELT” which was delivered to Ecuadorian public-school teachers who then suggested we publish them so that they could be available to a larger audience of (Ecuadorian) teachers of English.

## Background

English is undeniably consolidating and expanding its role as a Lingua Franca (ELF), namely, as the international language of business and communication (Patel et al., 2023). With its global spread, it is difficult to make any generalizations on how English should be to be taught contextually, namely, in a way that allows for all the variables that may exist in geographic and socio-economic terms, as well as takes into account our learners’ characteristics, such as age, gender and skill diversity.

In recent years, there has been an effort to rethink the way we perceive language and how additional languages are learnt and taught (Kerr, 2022). There is a better understanding how in a globalized world multilingualism can bring about tangible benefits. While for the majority of Ecuadorian learners English is usually their first additional language (Spanish being their native tongue), there is a substantial minority for whom it is a third language (Spanish being their second, immersive language). This fact needs to be observed whether we are looking at the issue of inclusivity in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion (British Council, 2009), or personalized learning in the language classroom (Griffiths & Keohane, 2000).

## Overview of Chapters

However, there are issues that supersede geographical location and the lack or abundance of ICT tools, and one of these is classroom management (Scrivener, 2012). Chapter 1 by Agnes Orosz sums up the basic elements of effective classroom management, starting with such straightforward issues as physical aspects (light and temperature, the layout of tables and chairs, etc.). Once these have been taken care of, the author describes how student engagement and behaviour can be managed effectively. She explains how much students’ reactions depend on the teacher’s own attitude and behaviour (such as being in class on time and creating a positive and welcoming atmosphere). Learner engagement can be further enhanced by creating rapport and using/creating personalized materials. However, even the best

learning materials may fall flat unless the task cycles are managed effectively: this implies clear instructions and helpful feedback given at appropriate stages of the lesson. The author argues that classroom management is an essential skill that all future teachers should learn to employ, especially in the Global South where teachers often work with large groups of learners in under-resourced classrooms.

Chapter 2 written by Uvaldo Recino looks at three English Language Teaching (ELT) methods (approaches) that are specifically endorsed in the 2016 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum In Ecuador (Currículo 2016 Lengua Extranjera). These are: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and Task-Based Learning (TBL, also referred to as Task-Based Language Teaching-TBLT).

Communicative Language Teaching might have passed its heyday in many parts of the world (and we tend to talk about a post-method era, see Brown, 2010), but in Ecuador CLT is still not a widespread approach, especially in the country's less advantaged, rural areas. The author lists down the fundamental features of CLT and offers a wealth of examples on how those principles can be put into practice.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (Coyle et al., 2010) has become quite widespread (at least in Europe) and is perceived as having a beneficial effect: "CLIL may have a positive impact on learner motivation, attitudes towards learning the language, and enhanced confidence" (Kerr, 2022, p. 13). He adds, though, that a task-driven approach and group work can probably lead to more language gains than a teacher-led class where communication is more tightly managed and is mainly channelled through the teacher.

Recino emphasizes that combining content and language allows for learning experientially, namely, using the language to acquire knowledge of another school subject. By using the method, Coyle's 4 C's (2007) are fully covered since content is being learnt through cognition, and there is communication taking place, which leads to the rise of a language learning community. Just as with CLT, the author presents CLIL's theoretical basics and offers a number of practical examples.

Task-Based Learning (also Task-Based Language Teaching) is perceived as a realization of the CLT approach as far as it is based on the use of tasks at the level of syllabus design (Nunan, 2004). The relevant section of Chapter 2 describes the framework and the stages of TBL stressing that carrying out task-based activities does not necessarily require the latest ICT tools because the focus is on communication and interaction involving pairs or group members.

Chapter 3 written by Julia Sevy, Tania Cajamarca and Andrea Ávila gives the reader a detailed review of and practical guide to three reading strategies. These are the Language Experience Approach (LEA), Extensive Reading (ER) and Reading Circles (RCs).

The Language Experience Approach (LEA) (Nessel & Dixon, 2008) aims at developing learners' reading and writing skills by setting up an environment in which learners are asked to share their life experiences. Experience sharing starts with oral contributions and listening to each other during group discussions followed by reading and writing activities, thereby developing all four language skills. The authors describe the steps associated with LEA emphasizing that it is a flexible approach that can be employed in widely different settings and age groups.

As an approach, Extensive Reading has been around for a fairly long time (Leather & Uden, 2021) and has proved to be an excellent tool to enhance students' language proficiency while also supporting autonomous learning and critical thinking skills. However, Willy Renandya, who in 2023 gave a webinar for UNAE's English teaching staff, emphasizes that Extensive Reading should not be expected to bring fast results:

People often expect instant results. They want to see improvements in students' ability in a few weeks or months' time. We now know from research that extensive reading takes time. In the first

6 months or so, we normally begin to see improvements, but not much. At this stage, students have just begun to become more interested in reading, develop more confidence as they can now read faster and more fluently and with greater comprehension. (Renandya, 2014, p. 68)

That said, Extensive Reading has a couple of tenets that should be observed and followed. Students should be able to freely choose what they want to read. Leveled readers, which are categorized by difficulty, allow students to find books that are appropriate for their interests and language proficiency. ER has space for both guided and autonomous activities, and Chapter 3 offers useful guidance of the various stages and some of the activities that support students in the ER process, potentially creating lifelong readers on the way.

Setting up Reading Circles (often called Literature Circles) is another approach that goes beyond reading as such, as the process starts with members of the circle agreeing on different roles that they would perform in their small groups when they come together after the independent reading period. The coauthors of the chapter describe the process to be followed (Day et al., 2002) including the final presentation and discussion stages.

All three approaches mention critical thinking as a skill that can be enhanced by systematic extensive reading. The term itself has been described by dozens of definitions and has, by now, become a crucial element of a new set of 4 C's for the 21st century (Mavridi & Xerri, 2020), the other three being communication, collaboration and creativity, all of which have their rightful place in the language classroom.

However, Kerr (2022) issues a caveat, saying that critical thinking skills are difficult to define and even more difficult to measure, and while the label is almost omnipresent, its application may vary according to how dedicated teachers are and how much time is devoted to improving a skill that is deemed to be essential for, among others, digital information literacy:

The learning material that is labelled “critical thinking” does not always differentiate between “using critical thinking” and “becoming a better critical thinker”, and the former does not always lead to the latter. But cognitively more challenging tasks and texts may motivate and engage some (but not all!) learners and lead to extensive opportunities for authentic language practice. (Kerr, 2022, p. 30)

He goes on to say that “fuller approaches to critical thinking can be found in EAP courses, where critical thinking and academic language learning are seen to be mutually supportive” (p. 30), a context that is highly applicable to both the instructors and the student-teachers in the department of *Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros* (PINE [Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages]) at UNAE.

Digital literacy can be defined in many ways, but using digital tools in language learning opens up creative and engaging ways for practicing the four basic skills, including speaking, stress the authors of Chapter 4, Heidi Matute and Tania Rodas. They describe the various ways that a digital game called WordWall can be used for various aspects of speaking. The pair and group activities employed take advantage of the notion that gamification, namely, “the incorporation of various elements from games into language learning activities” (Kerr, 2022, p. 88) is more likely to work best:

... when there is interaction with other players, as opposed to simply playing against the machine. It is the social element of game play, whether in the form of collaboration or competition, or both, that has a more lasting impact on motivation and engagement. (Kerr, 2022, p. 89)

The authors provide a detailed description of WordWall's Random Wheel, the Open the Box, the Balloon Pop, and the Gameshow Quiz. These games are all engaging but have different types of appeal. Whilst the Random Wheel creates a low-pressure practice environment with an element of surprise, the Open the Box feature allows teachers to create various interactive activities that are most successful when learners think quickly and use natural conversational flow. Balloon Pop is a typical gamified application as it awards point for each correct answer while it only allows a limited number of attempts encouraging students to pay attention to accuracy.

Finally, the Gameshow quiz can be played both collaboratively and individually. Answering the questions requires not just memorization but active thinking and logic under time pressure. Teachers can customize the multiple-choice questions to assess grammar, vocabulary and comprehension. The authors provide several examples for all four games and emphasize that WordWall has a number of interactive features that stimulate active participation and teamwork.

Whilst the use of terminology regarding English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) may have changed and we are more inclined to refer to English as an Additional Language (EAL), the fact remains that the difference between the first two is pertinent. English in Ecuador is a Foreign Language, which means that there is no support for it outside the classroom. That is why the activities described in Chapter 5 written by Janina Quito and Verónica Herrera are so relevant. Even though the tasks that they have created are based on the fact that we live in a digital world, their objectives are mainly to increase lower-level students' motivation to use English outside class and to allow for authentic engagement with a peer.

The platform that the authors are proposing is Telegram, which has a very accessible user interface and allows students and teachers to keep their contact information private. The student pairs working together may come from the same class or another class. They are given a series of tasks and since the teacher is included in each and every group, they can monitor that the interaction is appropriate and takes place in English.

The authors describe a series of activities, some focus on grammar, others on reading comprehension, and further options include daily journaling and creative writing as well as podcast clubs and short video analyses. Early feedback from students suggests that the activities are not too taxing and provide extra opportunities to practice English out of class. The issue remains how setting up these tasks on a daily basis affects teachers' workload, but it may be assumed that, over time, a stock of activities can be built up and recycled.

Clearly, using cellphones is just a basic part of digital literacy, which, in Kerr's (2022, p. 37) understanding involves:

- **Network literacy:** the way in which we build and participate in digital social networks
- **Personal literacy:** the way in which our identities are projected and protected online
- **Critical digital literacy:** the way in which we critically evaluate online content

That said, Quito and Herrera have found an innovative way of using a digital tool that is, literally, in the pockets of billions of people, 1.5 billion of whom are learners of English (Patel et al., 2023).

It is clear that when the platform of delivering knowledge changes, so should the tools that are meant to measure advancement in language proficiency. In Chapter 6, Helen Moreira and Martha Lara present a digital assessment tool called Quizizz that offers several advantages: it allows for interaction, can be used both for individual and group work, provides students with immediate feedback and is highly versatile for teachers when wishing to carry out formative or summative assessment (Lim & Yunus, 2021). The authors provide a very detailed, step-by-step guide as to how quizzes can be created and how the tool itself supports learning through, for example, graphic organizers. They emphasize that

technological tools for all stages of language acquisition are here to stay but in order for them to be fully aligned with educational goals, teachers need a lot of encouragement, support and, first and foremost, regular training opportunities.

## Conclusion

Altogether, as can be seen from the summary of the six chapters included in the volume, the 11 authors and the editorial board have made a strenuous effort to present the results of the research process in an accessible manner providing an easy-to-follow manual or handbook for the teaching and learning of key skills in our post-method era.

It is our hope that the suggested practical solutions arising from the action research process as well as the sources and resources the volume sets forth, will result in this publication being of use to both pre-service and in-service Ecuadorian English teachers and other ELT professionals in the Global South and beyond.



# Chapter 1. Classroom Management

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Elementary-  
Higher  
Education





## Introduction

In the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, the effective management of a classroom is a cornerstone of successful learning outcomes (Hardin, 2011). Whether teaching young learners in a public school or guiding adult students in a university setting, the art of classroom management transcends mere control and discipline (McEwan Landau, 2003). It encompasses the creation of a conducive learning environment, fostering a culture of respect, and maximizing engagement, all the while ensuring the acquisition of language skills remains at the forefront (Diniatulhaq et al., 2020).

This chapter delves into the intricacies of classroom management specific to EFL contexts. It aims to provide educators with a brief toolkit of the most important and effective strategies, techniques, and insights honed through years of practical experience and research (Goodwin et al., 2022). By exploring the unique challenges and opportunities that arise in EFL environments, this chapter equips teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to cultivate a dynamic, enriching, and inclusive learning space (Dörnyei, 2001).

We explore the three main ingredients of effective classroom management; managing the physical aspects of the classroom, managing student engagement and behavior, and finally, how to best set up activities and get feedback (Garrett, 2014).

From my experience of almost 10 years of teacher training during which I have observed several hundred (perhaps thousands) of lessons being taught by prospective, as well as in-service EFL teachers, I can honestly say that nothing contributes to the success of a lesson more than effective classroom management, and therefore there is nothing more important to master if we are to teach effective and engaging lessons to our students (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

This was confirmed during the classroom observation phase of the research project from which this volume was born (“Successful practices in English teaching and linguistic and pedagogical formation of pre-service English teachers in PINE and the Language Centre at the National University of Education”). It became evident in many observations that teachers might plan the most incredible lesson and have the most amazing materials, but if classroom management techniques are not effectively implemented, the lesson will fall flat despite all the meticulous preparation.

What follows in this chapter, therefore, are the lessons learnt from the research project, in the sense that it is a recompilation of the best practices in classroom management that were observed from the teachers at UNAE. We have compiled these into useful tips that teachers at any level of ELT can use in their classrooms.

## Literature Review

The first important aspect often cited in the literature about classroom management has to do with managing all the physical aspects of a classroom (Cheryan et al., 2014). This includes effective use of the whiteboard, projector (if there is one in your classroom), sound, the layout of the tables and chairs, ventilation, temperature, lights, worksheets and other materials and resources and technology. Scrivener (2012) emphasizes that all of these things can contribute to student learning and engagement when managed well, or detract from it more than we perhaps realize if not managed properly.

Secondly, a pivotal aspect of classroom management is managing students’ behavior and learning. This includes ensuring that your students are engaged in learning at all times (Frank et al., 2018). That they are listening to you when you speak, participate when appropriate, take part in the activities willingly and do what you have asked them to do without being distracted or engaging in other activities not related to English learning. Ironically perhaps, much of this is actually depends on managing the

teacher's own behavior (Vijayan et al., 2016), as expressed in the teacher's demeanor, body language, tone of voice, body position, and rapport with the students. Richards & Rogers (2001) emphasize how important this is when they write about the surprisingly wide-ranging impact of establishing a positive rapport with students on their learning experience.

Finally, how a teacher sets up activities and gets feedback is also a crucial part of classroom management. This refers to effectively managing the task cycle with clear instructions and helpful feedback. Penny Ur (1996) writes that this aspect of classroom management is absolutely essential to the success of lessons. Therefore, it is worthwhile really thinking about exactly how we give instructions as teachers.

## Strategy 1. Managing the physical aspects of the classroom

### Objective

To manage all the physical resources of the classroom in such a way that learning is maximally enhanced.

### Level

Imagine the impact on your learning if you were in a classroom that was too hot and too dark to see well, where the teacher wrote in tiny letters with bad quality markers and terrible handwriting on the board and the volume of the audio was so loud that the distortion meant you couldn't understand a thing. What would be the impact on your learning? On your mood? On your motivation and your state of mind?

### Description

My suggestions for this aspect of classroom management (see Syahputri et al., 2020) are the following.

Make the whiteboard your friend. Use it whenever possible to provide visual support for instructions, examples and language analysis. Make sure students have a written record of all new language. Make sure your writing is large and neat enough for everyone to read. Make use of colors, underlining, boxes, grids and visuals to record language. Consider what the students' notebooks will look like by the end of the course. Allow students time to copy what's written.

The layout of the tables and chairs is also pivotal (Ford, 2016). It is customary in Ecuadorian public schools to have students sitting in rows, and while this may be appropriate for exams, or for the presentation stage of the lesson, is this really the most conducive to setting up communicative practice activities? I would argue it isn't, since students are looking at the back of their classmates' heads most of the time instead of looking at their face, so it makes communication almost impossible. For communicative activities I suggest having your students sit in groups of 4 or 6 students with their desks pushed together to form little islands, or have a horseshoe (U-shaped) arrangement where every student can see all the other students' faces and all the students can see the front of the classroom, the teacher and the board. This will ensure that when speaking, students can see each other and thus can communicate much more effectively.

One final point I'd like to make is students having their backpacks on the tables during a lesson. I have noticed that Ecuadorian students will often put their backpack on their table and leave it there for the entire duration of the lesson. This means they (and sometimes their partner too) don't have enough space on their desk for their notebook and textbook and they can also hide their cellphone behind their bag and allow it to distract them during the lesson. So, I always make it a special rule in my classroom that there are no bags on tables allowed. If students are worried about their backpack getting dirty on the floor, there is usually an extra chair that can be used to store the backpack during class.

## Strategy 2. Managing student engagement and behavior

### Objective

To ensure all students remain engaged and focused on the lesson objectives at all times and that their behavior always enhances and never detracts from learning.

### Level

Imagine that you are a student and your teacher walks into the class late, head looking down, greets you nonchalantly and in a bored, quiet and monotone voice asks the class to open their books on page 55 and then warns the class that the grammar point they are about to learn is long and boring and complicated and they probably won't understand it. S/he then proceeds to tell off the students who didn't hear the instructions and didn't open their books fast enough. What would you expect to be the impact on student engagement and behavior in such a classroom?

In contrast, imagine that as you walk into your language classroom as a student a few minutes before the class is due to start, the teacher is already there, there is an interesting picture projected onto the board with a controversial question to discuss in pairs, there is lively pop music playing at a gentle volume, the teacher greets you with a big genuine smile and a chirpy "good morning" calling you by the name you had told him/her that you like to be called. When the time comes to start the class the teacher greets the class with enthusiasm and energy, her shoulders back, arms out in a welcoming posture. She tells the class that the grammar they will learn today is important and that she has no doubt that if the students pay careful attention they will easily understand it. She then proceeds to introduce the grammar point through a kinesthetic activity that involves the students running to the board in a team game and there is lots of laughter during the game. What would you expect to be the impact on student engagement and behavior in this classroom?

It is clear to see through such examples, that student engagement and behavior really is often simply a direct reflection of what the teacher brings to the classroom in their own demeanor. If the teacher looks and acts bored, frustrated and uninterested, the learners will also have the very same attitude. If, however, they come in with an infectious positive but still genuine energy in their body language and voice, the students will often respond in kind.

### Description

Bearing all this in mind, my suggestions for optimizing student engagement and behavior are the following (see Shernoff, 2013):

- Add variety in any way you can e.g. mix up groups, have students work with different partners, have some individual, some pair, and some group work in each lesson, play team games a couple of times a week, vary the focus of your lessons.
- Take advantage of every minute, i.e. eliminate dead time (have links set up, open and ready to go)
- Have something for them to do the minute they walk in
- Start on time (otherwise you are training them to be late)
- Pay attention to your voice, your body position, your energy, your rapport, your "suggestions" (e.g. "I know this is confusing and difficult, but...")
- Create excellent rapport with your students by getting to know them and letting them know you

- Create a friendly, positive and relaxed learning environment
- Learn their names on the first day and use them to nominate students to participate
- Respect your learners
- Really listen to what they say
- Make lessons enjoyable and fun, use activities that involve movement
- Personalize materials; this means asking students to talk about themselves and their experiences
- Use your body language to convey great energy, enthusiasm, openness and confidence

Most importantly make sure you have lots of student-focused activities in your lesson plan and that you minimize teacher talking time as much as possible. This means keeping the presentation phase as short as possible, making it interactive and limiting or eliminating lecturing your students. Especially for young learners, simply talking at your students is ineffective and, as Lightbown & Spada (2013) point out, can lead to poor engagement and behavior.

## Strategy 3. Setting up activities and getting feedback

### Objective

To set up activities in such a way that students are always clear about exactly what they have to do to complete an activity and that they receive feedback in such a way that they are clear about exactly how to improve

### Description

When it comes to managing the task cycle effectively, my suggestions are as follows (see El Kemma, 2019).

When giving instructions for an activity, wait for silence and make sure you're at the front of the class so everyone can hear and is focused on you. Keep your instructions as short and simple as possible. Use imperatives and avoid using phrasal verbs. If you have a lot of instructions for different stages of an activity, give instructions step by step as you move on to a new stage rather than all at the start. Give instructions before you hand out any papers or worksheets and before students have started moving into groups. Check your instructions with specific Instruction Checking Questions (ICQ's). Do a demonstration or the first question as an example. Use the whiteboard to support your instructions. Write up an example if necessary. If several students seem not to have understood, stop everyone and explain again; there's no point in saying the same thing five times to five different students or groups.

When setting up pairs and groups (Chappell, 2014), it's better to indicate who should work together with a hand-gesture or by name. If you just say "get into groups" there's usually a lot of hesitation and confusion. Consider pairings and groupings beforehand, e.g., do you want stronger and weaker students together? Don't be afraid of stopping an activity before some students have finished. You need to strike a balance between some students twiddling their thumbs and others not finishing. Especially with young learners who will quickly become unruly if they finish a task and have not been given anything else to do, it is best to stop the activity once some students have finished and not wait for everyone to do so.

In terms of the teacher's positioning in the classroom, for instructions, explanations, presentations, etc., it's best to be in a central position at the front. If students are working individually or in groups, you can monitor them by moving around the room. To work with them, pull up a chair or crouch down so that you're at the same height (it's much less threatening). When you want the whole class to hear answers you're eliciting from students, avoid approaching the student speaking, as this will have the effect of them getting quieter. Keep standing at the front or move away from the student so that you're teaching the whole class and not a one-on-one lesson.

Make sure you grade your teacher talk (Haase & Rowe, 2022). This means adjusting the way you speak in English to the class (vocabulary you use, the speed you talk at) to your learners' level. So when you speak English to the group, change the speed of your speech and the words you use depending on the English level of the group. Remember that beginners and lower intermediate students (A1-B1) will need extra processing time, so slow down, use cognates, avoid idioms and phrasal verbs.

### Assessment

Teachers who have mastered excellent classroom management can effectively; implement the lesson plan and where necessary adapt it to emerging learner needs, manage the classroom space, furniture, equipment, materials and resources, set up whole class and/or group and/or individual activities with

clear instructions for activities and ensure the learners remain focused on the lesson aims and the learning outcomes.

### **Conclusion**

I believe that effective classroom management is the foundation for successful language learning and that perhaps not enough time and energy is being invested in this aspect of teaching and learning in training courses, pedagogy degrees and, as a knock-on effect, in the classrooms of overworked and under-resourced EFL teachers in places like Ecuador and the Global South in general. I hope that this chapter is a small step towards bridging that gap and in turn making a small difference to improve English learners' experiences in the classroom.



## Chapter 2. Three strategies for implementing some current English Language Teaching (ELT) methods mandated in the 2016 Ecuadorian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum

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## Introduction and Literature Review

The Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador has made multiple changes to enhance English language teaching practices over the years. In 2008, the Ministerio de Educación initiated a project called “Project for Improving English”. It included creating a new English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum, using Common European Framework indicators, providing free EFL textbooks to public school students, and requiring in-service teachers to have a B2 level of English proficiency (Cajas et al., 2023). Eight years later, the Ecuadorian government implemented the new English as a Foreign Language curriculum to train strong and independent readers and writers. Additionally, this curriculum aims to teach people how to use various tools to share ideas, become better learners, and expand their knowledge by providing them with multiple opportunities to use the English language in different contexts (Ministerio de Educación [Mineduc], 2019). In order to achieve these goals, teachers need to implement approaches, methods and strategies such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task Based Learning (TBL) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

Despite the changes made by the Ecuadorian government, several international studies have shown that English proficiency levels remain low in Ecuador. Therefore, determining which aspects affect the domain of the English language will guide the improvement of learning this language (Sevy-Biloon et al., 2020)

Aligning teacher and curricular expectations and outcomes in Ecuadorian education, of course, is an ongoing process. The Mineduc has introduced a complete, holistic educational system that includes second language education as part of the national curriculum, but the EFL curriculum has not been successful (Cronquist & Fiszbein, 2017). Some of the problems have been linked to teacher methodologies and class practices and in particular to inadequate implementation of communicative approaches. Because teachers tend to offer grammar and vocabulary to students in non-interactive ways, students have inadequate opportunities to practice and absorb their English (Morales Ríos & Ferreira Cabrera, 2008). Although such limited studies are hardly demonstrative, the consistent underperformance of Ecuador among its regional peers in English language proficiency speaks to the nationwide discrepancy between the stated curricular goals and measurable outcomes. Thus, improving outcomes depends on exposing and understanding misalignments between Ecuadorian teaching methods and the national curriculum and, accordingly, identifying and implementing opportunities for improvement.

During the development of the research project: Successful practices in English teaching and linguistic and pedagogical formation of Pre-service English teachers in PINE and Language Center at Universidad Nacional de Educación (UNAE), the author of this chapter conducted scientific research using a qualitative approach and the Action Research (AR) methodological design to study and implement the three strategies proposed here.

The paradigm of this project was constructivist; Widari & Jazadi (2019) describe it as “a learning paradigm that argues that humans build the meaning of the various structures of knowledge that exist in themselves. The constructivist paradigm explains how knowledge is internalized by the learner” (p. 58). We pretended to use previous experiences to create new ones based on the interactions of our participants to get; as a result, authentic and meaningful use of CLT, TBL and CLIL. We conducted an exploratory action research process (AR) that according to Smith & Rebolledo (2018), it “is a way to explore, understand and improve our practice as teachers” (p. 20). In our AR process, we used CLT, TBL and CLIL in a natural context to collect accurate data. It allowed us to study to understand our condition better and take measures for improvement, as well as collect accurate data by analyzing actual behavior in a natural context.

Knowledge and use of ELT approached, methods and strategies are essential for English teachers to teach better lessons. This chapter provides a detailed practical description for implementing CLT, TBL,

and CLIL in Ecuadorian classrooms. These three ELT methods and strategies are essential elements of the basic principles of the 2016 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Ecuadorian curriculum, and learning how to implement them will help teachers manage the curriculum better at the classroom level. The strategies in this chapter will also help you provide your students with communicative activities that will contribute to developing their communicative competence in English. They have been specifically designed and proved in the AR process to help teachers plan and teach more engaging, creative, dynamic, and interactive lessons to help students develop the linguistic skills and competence required by the current Ecuadorian macro curriculum. They involve simple but effective activities that can be applied in the Ecuadorian classrooms of public and private schools, even with limited resources. They have also been disseminated in publications and trialed in the workshop “Successful Practices in ELT” offered to Ecuadorian public-school teachers, who suggested we publish them to be available to a larger audience of Ecuadorian English teachers.

## Strategy 1. Using CLT to teach EFL in the Ecuadorian context

### Introduction and Literature Review

When CLT is analysed, it is paramount to bring into discussion the major assumptions and principles behind this key language teaching methodology. With regard to assumptions, Ahmad & Rao (2013) and Al-Twairish (2009) stated out that a second or foreign language is acquired when L2 learners take part in the process of communicating in the target language. In addition to that, these authors indicated that in a CLT classroom L2 learning is facilitated when students engage in collaborative learning activities, interaction, communication, and negotiation and sharing of meaning.

Concerning the fundamental principles of CLT, it is key to take into account that structure-based teaching methodologies do not provide learners with meaningful and communicative learning opportunities, but CLT does provide opportunities for (second/ foreign) language learning. Richards (2006) noted that the six key principles behind CLT are as follows: first, the main focus of language learning is authentic communication; second, a provision of lots of opportunities for trying out what learners know and are able to do is essential; third, a tolerance of L2 learners' is needed as this may be evidence of their communicative competence development; forth, guidance and personalized

attention for helping learners develop both accuracy and fluency; fifth, use of inductive learning for grammar instruction; sixth development and enhancement of the major language skills is essential. Regarding the last principle, Savignon (1997) commented that within a communicative classroom context L2 learners need to develop effectively their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Such development is at the centre of the CLT methodology because they altogether facilitate learners to achieve communicative competence. Putting these six CLT principles into practice is essential for the Ecuadorian teachers of English to the develop the communicative competence that the 2016 EFL curriculum aims at.

In the AR process carried out as part of the research project: Successful practices in English teaching and linguistic and pedagogical formation of Pre-service English teachers in PINE and Language Center at Universidad Nacional de Educación (UNAE), the author applied the teaching of CLT and its principles in demo lessons developed with the university students as the generalization of the scientific result published by Orosz et al. (2023) which concluded that:

... the two cycles of Action Research design allowed non-evaluative performance observations by two observers (a senior colleague teaching didactics and a senior student of the ELT major). The agency awarded to the class teacher (through her own reflections) and that of the two observers ensured that the observations took place in a collegial and non-hierarchical manner. This was further enhanced by the active participation of the student teachers who, beyond the demo lessons that they delivered, were able to provide feedback to the student teachers whose presentations they were actively engaged in as the target audience and participants of the demo classes. By analyzing the triangulated data arising from the observations and the responses to the survey questionnaire, the authors contend that giving demo classes (microteaching) is a useful technique to prepare student teachers for their future careers. Simultaneously, reflection and an Action Research-style process can result in improvements that can make the outcomes of microteaching more effective and its lessons even more memorable.

## Objectives

Firstly, to provide Ecuadorian EFL teachers with strategies to implement CLT in teaching EFL and to offer them tools to develop their students' communicative competence in the English language.

## Description

The proposed EFL macro curriculum's focus is communicative, consistent with the intention expressed by the Ministerio de Educación documents: Updating and Strengthening the Curriculum 2010. Within this approach, the proposal emphasizes developing the four communicative skills rather than linguistic content learning as its first principle (Mineduc, 2016). The main goal of CLT is to develop communicative competence. For this reason, implementing CLT can help you put into practice this first principle of the macro curriculum in your classrooms.

Richards (2006) defines CLT as a set of principles about teaching goals, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom.

Suppose you want to implement these principles in your classroom. In that case, you have to plan tasks and activities that respond to this set of overarching principles of CLT methodology for classic communicative language teaching (Richards, 2006):

1. Make real communication the focus of language learning.
2. Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know.
3. Be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence.
4. Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency.
5. Link the different skills, such as speaking, reading, and listening, together since they usually occur in the real world.
6. Let students induce or discover grammar rules.

In order to use the strategy described here, you will first need to design and develop communicative activities and tasks in pairs and groups so that communication becomes the focus of your lessons. To achieve this objective, you need to set group/pair work activities for them to interact to complete the assigned tasks. Implementing the above principles of CLT methodology may be of great value to make communication the main focus of the teaching and learning process of EFL in your classroom.

If you want to implement this first principle of CLT: Make real communication the focus of language learning, you have to start by creating a communicative environment in your classroom, providing your students with communicative tasks and activities characterized by things such as information gaps, situations in which some students have information that others do not have. This means they have to establish interactional communication processes to get that information and fill in that information gap. In this communicational process, you should let your students choose the language they want to use to interact; that is, let them select the kind of language they want to use, either formal, informal, or even colloquial language rather than prescribed grammatical patterns or specific vocabulary.

In this communicative process, the feedback they will get from one another will help them correct their mistakes, but you should not interrupt their communication process to correct any language mistake as long as it does not affect the meaning of what they are saying; that is, when they respond to their interlocutors according to the information provided or requested, they will be communicating, making meaning and engaging and there will automatically be peer correction at the same time so teachers should not correct language mistakes at this stage. A better idea is to walk around the classroom

and take down notes of the mistakes you notice, and then, after the activity is done, you can take a few minutes to give individual or group feedback and make corrections.

In order to make real communication the focus of language learning, teachers have moved away from the traditional ELT method of deductive grammar teaching that is typical of the EFL Ecuadorian classrooms and, which does little to contribute to the development of the student's communicative competence. Teachers should move towards implementing more communicative methods and approaches that lead to developing their students' communicative competence.

In order to implement the second principle, provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know, and engage your students in free practice and production activities such as role plays, simulations, and so on. The purpose of these activities is meaning-making and fluency rather than accuracy. These activities will help students practice what they learn without worrying about making grammar and pronunciation mistakes but focusing on meaning through communication. It is also important to let students speak freely.

Error correction is essential to the third CLT methodology principle cited above. Teachers are always concerned about students' language mistakes and how and when to correct them. In CLT, mistakes are not always mistakes. Suppose students are engaged in actual communicative practice, as stated before. In that case, it might be more harmful to interrupt the student to correct the mistake than to let it go and then make the correction and feedback after the activity has finished or plan and make an error correction section in any other subsequent lesson.

You have to find the appropriate time to correct the error and give feedback. It would be best not to interrupt your students while they are speaking because this would frustrate them and interfere with their learning process.

Two lesson stages are the most appropriate for error correction. One is during the control practice stage, where you can help students avoid making mistakes in the free practice and production stage. The other one is in the reflection and feedback stage at the end of your lesson. However, it will never be advisable to stop students and correct their mistakes during free communicative activities where the prime goal is meaning-making. Remember that we all learn from our mistakes in all spheres of life.

In foreign language teaching, teachers have to focus on both accuracy and fluency, so you should provide activities in the practice stage of your lesson that help your students be accurate in their vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Then, in the free practice or production stage, provide your students with activities to develop their fluency, that is, activities in which they use their ideas freely to make meaning without worrying too much about their grammar or pronunciation. To sum up, design and teach tasks and activities for your students to develop accuracy in the practice stage of your lesson and activities to develop fluency in the production stage.

Language skills should not be taught in isolation. Generally, in our mother tongue, we usually speak, listen, and sometimes, read and write at the same time, and this is also stated in the fifth principle of the CLT methodology: Link the different skills such as speaking, reading, and listening together, since they usually occur so in the real world, so when you teach the four language skills in English, teach them in integration. If you teach receptive skills like reading and /or listening, always assign post-listening or reading activities in which they have to speak and/or write about what they listened to or read. Teaching these four language skills in integration will significantly help your students develop their communicative competence.

According to the sixth CLT methodology principle, we should let students induce or discover grammar rules. Nevertheless, Ecuadorian ELT has been characterized by deductive grammar teaching; this is one of the reasons why most students prefer to avoid English. They are not motivated to learn as the English class is usually centered around learning and practicing grammar rules without practical application to real communication, so the students do not feel the need to learn them. However, use the

inductive methods to teach grammar, starting with examples and letting students induce or discover the grammar rules. Your lessons will be more communicative, your students will be more motivated, and they will learn better and store the grammar rules they discover in their long-term memory because my teaching practice has shown me that inductive grammar learning is more meaningful and memorable.

If you apply these principles in your classes, the students will develop the communicative competence that Ecuadorian country demands from them. To apply these principles, you do not need ICT tools or any other sophisticated resources. You only need to design and assign communicative tasks that have some information gap, organize your students in pairs or groups, and let them communicate. It is through authentic communication processes that we learn in our mother tongue and any foreign language we want to acquire.

CLT can be used to teach students of all levels and ages if you adapt the communicative task to their age, learning needs and interest and English proficiency level.

## Strategy 2. TBL method to implement CLT in the Ecuadorian curriculum

### Introduction and Literature Review

It is imperative that English as a foreign language (EFL) practitioners have a solid understanding of communicative language teaching methodologies, as they facilitate student language learning. Thus, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which is known to be a descendant of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Demirezen, 2011) is one of the ELT methods that the Ecuadorian EFL teacher needs to put into practice to accomplish the objectives of the 2016 EFL Ecuadorian Curriculum.

Larsen-Freeman (2000) stated that TBLT is an approach that gives learners plenty of opportunities for using the target language in an authentic, natural, and interactive manner as they try to complete a task; this in turn facilitates understanding and expressing meaning in the L2 classroom. Richards & Rodgers (2001) explained that TBLT is a language teaching approach in which tasks have a central role, because they are the starting point for lesson planning and delivery in the language learning classroom. In addition to definitions behind TBLT, Izadpanah (2010) stated that the popularity of this important communicative language teaching approach lies in the premise that a more authentic language use is fostered when task-based learning activities are incorporated into the classroom setting. With these notions in mind, it is believed that TBLT has provided a different perspective for language teaching and teaching in general.

The effectiveness of the strategy proposed here was also tested in demo lessons conducted to generalize the AR processes that gave origin to the article written by Recino et al. (2022) which concluded that

...the class teacher improved his teaching methodology to conduct the students' lesson planning skills and demo lesson teaching competencies that they need to develop as an essential element of their exit profile. It allowed the researchers to answer the research question: How can we teach the subject Didactics of English so that it contributes to the students exit profile and helps them develop the desired professional competencies? The recommendations derived from the three observations made to the demo lessons development allowed the teacher to improve his methodology to conduct the students teaching of the demo lessons as he could incorporate the suggestions given by another teacher and a senior study for the betterments of his classes and students answers to the interview questions proved that the activities associated to planning and teaching demo lessons are effective for the development of their professional competencies as future teachers of English. (p. 30)

### Objectives

To illustrate the use of TBL by Ecuadorian EFL teachers to help students develop their communicative competence in English.

### Description

The Presentation, Practice, and Production (PPP) methodology has been used to teach English for many years all over the world, and Ecuador is no exception. The PPP cycle derives from the behaviorist view of learning, which rests on the principle that repetition helps to “automate” responses and that practice makes perfect. The PPP cycle has been widely used in CLT for years, but its underlying theory has now

been discredited for the following reasons. Sometimes, learners manage to do the task or role-play at the production stage without using the target form at all. Sometimes, they tend to overuse the target form and make very unnatural conversation. PPP gives an illusion of mastery as students can often produce the required forms confidently in the classroom, but once outside or in a later lesson, they either do not use them at all or use them incorrectly. On the other hand, TBL offers a holistic language experience where learners carry out communication tasks using the language they have learned from previous lessons or other sources. Only after the task cycle is learners' attention directed towards specific features of language form (Richards, 2006).

Many students find English difficult, and in many EFL classrooms around Ecuador, some even end up hating the subject. This is usually so because teachers only focus on grammar exercises that do not motivate students to learn. However, if students engage in interactive communicative tasks, this situation may change significantly.

Nunan (1989) defines the communicative task as a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right.

Along with CLIL and CLT, the 2016 Ecuadorian EFL Curriculum fosters the use of Task-based Language Teaching (Mineduc, 2016). Thus, it is worth noting that CLT is viewed as a broad, philosophical approach to language teaching, while TBLT is regarded as a realization of such philosophy at the levels of syllabus design and methodology (Nunan, 2010).

Izadpanah (2010), from a TBLT perspective, states that the L2 learning process is activated and promoted through the use of tasks in the classroom. As affirmed by Nunan (2004), the central idea behind the term task refers to communicative language use derived from the implementation of tasks in the classroom where greater emphasis is centered on meaning more than forms or structures. Nunan (2004) further explains that a task within TBLT involves creating, communicating, and practicing in the target language and in a learning atmosphere where sharing meaning is more important than the mastery of grammar. In order to plan and deliver effective TBLT lessons, it is pivotal to learn about the different types of tasks (Ortega et al., 2019). Willis (1996) proposes the following framework to implement TBL:

1. Pre-task (including topic and task)
2. Task cycle
  - 2.2. Task
  - 2.3. Planning
3. Report
4. Language focus
5. Analysis
  - 5.1. Practice

In order to implement this framework, you should develop the following activities in your class.

### Pre-task activities

1. To help your students understand the theme and purpose of the task, you can do a brainstorming activity to get ideas from the class about the topic; you can use pictures, mime, or a personal experience to introduce the theme.
2. The students can do a pre-task, such as the word-out game or any other warm-up activity related to the topic.
3. You may pre-teach some vocabulary, but wait to introduce any grammar structure at this stage.

4. Give students preparation time for them to think and discuss how they are going to complete the task.
5. You can also play a recording of a task completion similar to the one the students will do for them to use as a model, or if the task is based on a reading, the students may read part of it before doing the task.

### Task cycle

#### Task

1. The students complete the task by doing pair or group work. This task may be based on a listening or reading text.
2. You monitor the activity and encourage the students. You help them to formulate what they want to express but do not correct grammar errors or form at this stage. Only emphasize spontaneous talk and help the students feel confident within the small group.
3. If students succeed in achieving the goal of the task, they will be strongly motivated.

#### Planning

In this stage, the students get ready to report to the whole class how they completed the task and their discoveries and decisions. They practice what they will say and how they will present their findings.

Your role is to make sure that the purpose of the report is clear enough for the class to understand it, and you act as a language advisor, helping the students with the vocabulary they may need to complete the task and help your students rehearse the oral presentations. Emphasize appropriate clarity, accuracy, and organization for a public presentation.

Some students may take advantage of this stage to ask questions about specific language they might need for the report.

#### Report

The students share their oral reports with the whole class. You act as the judge, choosing who will speak, and you may give feedback on content and form in this stage.

### Language focus

#### Analysis

The students do reflexive activities to identify and process specific language items derived from the reading text or from the script of the listening text, and they may also ask questions about any other language not noticed in advance.

You review the analysis activity with the students and introduce other useful vocabulary and grammar structures. You may also review some language features from the report stage.

#### Practice

4. Develop practice activities after the analysis phase in order to build confidence.
5. The students practice the vocabulary and grammar structures from the analysis phase as well as other items from the task text or from the report stage and copy the valuable vocabulary and structures in their notebooks.

This is an effective ELT method that I have been using for many years. It encourages students to learn more and develop their English communicative competence. No ICT tools are necessary. You only need to provide the students with communicative tasks and let them complete these through an interactional

process. If the classroom shape and size allow it, it is best if students can sit in a horseshoe shape in pairs or small groups, so that the teacher can talk to each pair or group from the inside of the horseshoe.

You only need to design and assign communicative tasks according to the students' proficiency level, age and learning needs and interests and assign enough time for them to complete the tasks so it can be used for students of any level and age.

## Strategy 3. CLIL to implement one of the principles of the Ecuadorian curriculum

### Introduction and Literature Review

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language. That is, in the teaching and learning process, there is a focus not only on content, and not only on language. Each is interwoven, even if the emphasis is greater on one or the other at a given time. CLIL is not a new form of language education. It is not a new form of subject education. It is an innovative fusion of both. CLIL is closely related to and shares some elements of a range of educational practices (Coyle et al., 2010)

The application and use of the CLIL strategy proposed here was derived from demo lessons developed as part of the research project whose results were published by Recino (2024) which concluded that:

... the teacher of Didactics of English considers that he improved his teaching methodology to conduct the student teachers' lesson planning skills and demo lesson teaching competencies that they need to develop as an essential element of their exit profile. The recommendations made in the two observation processes allowed the teacher to improve his methodology to conduct the student teachers teaching the demo lessons as he incorporated the suggestions of the two observers for the betterment of his classes and student teachers' answers to the interview questions proved that the activities associated to planning and teaching demo lessons are effective for the development of their professional competencies as future teachers of English. The gathered and discussed data during the AR process supports this thinking. (p. 49)

### Objectives

To provide Ecuadorian EFL teachers with knowledge and skills about CLIL so that they can practice this methodology in their classrooms as mandated in the 2016 EFL Ecuadorian curriculum.

### Description

As previously mentioned, CLIL and TBL under the CLT approach are essential elements of the 2016 EFL Ecuadorian curriculum (Mineduc, 2016).

CLIL is the second principle of the curriculum. This curriculum is based on a language-driven CLIL approach, where content from other disciplines is used for meaningful and purposeful language use. It supports the overall curriculum, developing cognitive and social skills needed for other subjects and reinforcing content covered in other areas (Mineduc, 2016).

CLIL means Content and Language Integrated Learning. It means that content from another school subject is taught through English. CLIL is based on experiential learning. The students learn by doing. They learn both content and language at the same time. Combining content and language, we can make an engaging and useful lesson, and we cover Coyle's 4 Cs: content, cognition, communication, and community.

Marsh (2012) emphasizes that every kind of language learning in which a target language is used for teaching students non-linguistic content can be called CLIL. As a result, CLIL becomes an umbrella term for all dual-process educational contexts (Coyle, 2007, p. 97).

For Eurydice (2015), the aim of CLIL is to develop proficiency in content as well as in foreign languages, teaching not only through the foreign language.

In order to use CLIL to teach your students, you will first need to choose an interesting topic from any other school subject from your students' curriculum. Then, decide the target vocabulary that you want to teach; that may be 6 to 10 words depending on the level of the students and, then, use any of these strategies to convey the meaning of the new words: pictures, realia, mime, synonyms, antonyms, anecdotes, texts, diagrams and charts, definitions, examples, etc. Then, use any of these teaching strategies to practice the new vocabulary: personalized questions, matching exercises, synonyms and antonyms, sentence completion, gap feeling, and games, and ask students to gesture, mime, and demonstrate.

After you have presented and practiced the chosen words, choose a grammar structure to focus on, but do not teach it using the deductive method. As previously explained, inductive grammar teaching is more communicative and leads to a more meaningful and memorable learning experience. To teach the focused structure using the inductive method, start with specific examples and then move towards focusing on the general rule. First, establish the context of use. This means the situation or the topic where we use the language, so it is related to language functions, the purpose of using language, and situational language topics. Inductive ways of teaching are more communicative than deductive.

After you have chosen the topic and introduced and practiced the new vocabulary and grammatical structures, choose a reading text from any of the students' school subjects. In order to use CLIL, you should use a reading text from any subject matter that students are studying while you teach English to them. Then, you may use pre-reading, while-reading, and after-reading tasks as stages of your CLIL lesson.

In the pre-reading stage, you can use any fun activity related to the reading as a warm-up. You can pre-teach some essential vocabulary for understanding the text. You can ask the students to predict what the text is going to be about using pictures or headings. Then, in the while reading stage, ask your students to skim the text for gist and check their predictions. After that, ask them to scan the reading for more specific information; that is, ask them to do a more intensive reading for details. In the post-reading stage, create a graphic organizer for students to develop critical thinking skills, then you can ask them to do any speaking/writing activity personalizing the reading text, that is, applying what they read to speak or write about themselves. Thus, the students will use the information creatively through writing or speaking assignments.

This strategy may become a useful tool in your hands as an English as a Foreign Language teacher. You can use the CLIL methodology and thus accomplish what is mandated in the 2016 Ecuadorian curriculum. It is an effective technique I have been using for many years to teach my students content subject matters like Didactics, Pedagogical models, and others through English. It encourages and motivates them to learn because they can relate the language learning to the content of other school subjects, and their learning is more memorable and meaningful. This methodology is easily adaptable to any group size as students work in pairs or in groups. No ICT tools are necessary. It may be useful for any language proficiency level as long as the students have enough English to understand and relate what they are learning in the foreign language with the contents of any other subject matter from their current school curriculum.

Subject matter texts in English are the basic resource resources you need to implement CLIL in your EFL classroom. It can be used for any age according to the school year they are doing so that they can integrate the learning of English with any other subject matter that they are studying.

## Assessment

As the three ELT strategies presented are derived from the CLT approach, teachers who will use any of them may do a self-evaluation of their lesson plans for each strategy using the following principle of CLT methodology as a check list.

1. Make real communication the focus of language learning
2. Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know
3. Be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence
4. Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency
5. Link the different skills such as speaking, reading and listening together, since they usually occur so in the real world.
6. Let students induce or discover grammar rules.

## Conclusion

The three strategies presented in this chapter: CLT, TBL and CLIL, scientifically proved by means of an AR process under a qualitative approach and disseminated in publications indexed journals resulting from the research process and shared in workshops and in international ELT conferences with teachers of English, they all aim to help the EFL Ecuadorian teacher to accomplish what is mandated in the 2016 EFL macrocurriculum, developing the students' communicative competence in English at the classroom level.



# Chapter 3. Reading strategies. Three Practices in Reading: Language Experience Approach, Extensive Reading and Reading Circles

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## Introduction

This comprehensive guide aims to provide English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers with practical insights into implementing these strategies effectively. These strategies were tested with beginner A1 and A2 level university students. However, they could be adapted to high school age A1-B1 level students depending on the materials and course format of the EFL teacher.

Each strategy mentioned in this chapter can improve teaching practices and student learning, specifically for reading, but also for general English language skills. The Language Experience Approach, extensive reading, and reading circles are outlined in the chapter, clearly explaining what they are, why they should be used to promote reading to foreign language students, and how they can be used in various classroom settings.

Each strategy is briefly explained, including the positive effects they can have on students. The strategies are based off research completed by Sevy-Biloon et al. (2023) detailing how English language teachers can use them in their distinct classrooms with different types of students at different levels of the language learning process. Through the exploratory action research completed by Sevy-Biloon et al. (2023) they found that the following three strategies when used separately and/or together throughout a semester or five-month period greatly improve students reading comprehension, motivation to read and English language abilities.

The strategies included in this chapter explain how EFL teachers can improve their students' reading abilities and general English language learning experiences when their students do not read much, do not practice English language learning outside of the classroom and are not motivated to improve their general English language skills.

### Literature Review

These strategies have been proven through the exploratory action research in the research project titled “Enhancing Comprehension and Motivation in lower-level Ecuador EFL students: An action research study of three reading strategies at UNAE”. This chapter was based on the positive findings of the research-based article *Enhancing Comprehension and Motivation in lower-level Ecuador EFL students: An action research study of three reading strategies at UNAE*, which was written by Julia Sevy-Biloon, Tania Cajamarca Alvear and Andrea Ávila. Based on classroom-based research previously completed by Sevy-Biloon et al. (2023) a step-by-step process is explained in the following chapter of how to utilize each strategy in a researched based fashion to encourage, improve and promote reading inside and outside of the classroom.

### Extensive Reading

As highlighted in the article completed by Sevy-Biloon et al. (2023) the extensive reading strategy is a powerful tool for EFL teachers to enhance students' language proficiency at various levels and ages. This strategy focuses on allowing students to choose their own texts, use leveled readers, incorporate various reading strategies, culminating in creative and interactive final projects associated with students' needs and interests. Through these activities, students develop critical thinking skills while fostering autonomous learning. Renandya et al. (2019) explain how the use of various reading strategies, specifically the use of materials that are at students' levels and constant reading inside and outside of the classroom can incrementally improve students' general language skills.

## Language Experience Approach

The Language Experience Approach (LEA) is an approach that helps language learners to develop their reading and writing skills through the sharing of their experiences. The main principle of Language Experience Approach or LEA is to use learners' own vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, and background experiences to create reading texts turning reading into a meaningful and authentic process. LEA also integrates the four main language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Storytelling is also fundamental when implementing LEA in the classroom since students should tell their own experiences to create the texts. The Language Experience Approach is fundamental in the development of basic skills in EFL students since it allows them not only to enhance their reading and writing skills, but also their productive skills. Students tell their own stories and experiences to the class. According to Krashen (2020), it is necessary to consider two criteria now by choosing adequate reading material for students. First, the text should be at the appropriate level facilitating its comprehension. Second, reading should be enjoyable and interesting for the learner. LEA, therefore, fulfills these two criteria. Since the texts are created by the students, they are at the learners' level of proficiency, and beyond that, those texts are bound to be interesting for the students since they created them based on their own interests.

Apart from the benefits mentioned above, LEA also supports the acquisition of other language components such as grammatical structures, vocabulary, and pragmatics. The constant contact learners have with words and structures in different contexts support the understanding of the different uses they may have. Additionally, pupils increase their vocabulary by being exposed to a large range of words.

The Learning Experience Approach is a flexible pedagogical strategy that enables educators to implement it with both individual students and groups. When engaging with individual students, educators draw upon personal experiences. Alternatively, in the event that the instructor engages with either the entire class or smaller groups, the implementation of LEA can be facilitated through a collective learning experience. Use the link below to learn more about [LEA](#).

## Reading Circles

Reading circles as well-known as literature circles have become a topic of interest in recent years (Noe & Johnson, 1999). Currently, this strategy is being utilized by teachers who are continuously encouraging their students to excel (Elhess & Egbert, 2015). According to Varita (2017), reading circles are discussion groups where people come together to foster reading skills and critical thinking in addition to enjoying books. These conversations foster a cooperative environment that gives participants a significant chance to develop and explore their ideas and thoughts, honing their ability to engage with and critically analyze the reading materials they encounter or choose. One of the most noteworthy aspects of this English strategy is related to the freedom students have to choose their preferred role which facilitates student involvement (Herrera & Kidwell, 2018). Daniels (1994) defines four fundamental roles for literature circles: the literary luminary, discussion director, connector, and illustrator. Additionally, Daniels suggests four additional roles: summarizer, vocabulary enhancer, travel tracer, and investigator. Another key aspect of this strategy pertains to the non-traditional roles assumed by both teachers and students. Teachers become facilitators, participants, mediators, and attentive listeners (Stein & Bede, 2004). Meanwhile, students take on a more proactive role by selecting their role and reading material, planning their own learning path, and evaluating their reading and progress independently (Hsu, 2004).

## Strategy 1. Language Experience Approach (LEA)

### Objective

Enhance reading comprehension and vocabulary for English language competencies

### Description

1. **Shared Experience:** Identify a subject or event that is interesting and significant to the students. Have students share their experiences orally while the teacher transcribes them.
2. **Group Discussion:** Facilitate a group discussion to reflect on the shared experience. Encourage students to share their thoughts, feelings, and observations.
3. **Storytelling:** Invite students to share their personal experiences related to the shared experience. This can involve recounting events, expressing emotions, or describing details.
4. **Teacher Transcription:** The teacher transcribes the students' stories verbatim, capturing their language, vocabulary, and grammatical structures exactly as they express them.
5. **Reading and Revising the Text:** Use the transcribed text as reading material. Students can suggest corrections or changes to the story, and the teacher can add comments.
6. **Shared Reading:** Conduct a shared reading session where the teacher and students read the transcribed text together.
7. **Analysis and Discussion:** Engage students in analyzing the text collaboratively, discussing vocabulary, grammar, and language-related questions.
8. **Writing Activities:** Use the shared experience and transcribed text as a basis for writing activities such as journal entries, essays, or creative pieces.
9. **Revision and Reflection:** Encourage students to revise and reflect on their writing, allowing for self-evaluation and improvement of language skills.
10. **Extension Activities:** Extend the learning by incorporating the language experience into additional activities, such as multimedia presentations, discussions, or further projects based on the shared experience.

### Applications and Examples

Project-based learning can take advantage of LEA. LEA could be used by a social studies teacher to teach about a historical event. Students could share an experience by exploring a historical site or listening to guest speakers. Teachers would capture students' experiences for reading, analysis, and writing. Students might make multimedia presentations or participate in conversations after sharing their experiences.

LEA can assist English discussion clubs in practicing and growing their language skills. Club members could share personal experiences or interests to generate transcribed material. Language comprehension can be improved by reading the information and discussing it with others. Reflecting on common experiences or creating new texts on new themes could be examples of writing activities.

LEA can accommodate special education students in their classrooms. The teacher could choose a topic or event that students are interested in and promote shared experiences that are appropriate for their abilities. Teachers could transcribe students' stories to complete their reading and writing requirements. Multimodal methods could be used in extension activities, or content could be tailored to different learning styles.

LEA can be utilized in a variety of educational settings to promote language development and engage students in meaningful and authentic learning.

### **Duration and Flexibility**

There is not a determined duration for LEA. It will depend entirely whether the teacher is applying it to a group or an individual. Also, it is important to consider the students' proficiency level and whether they have had previous experience in reading and writing. LEA has proved to be very flexible and can be applied to individuals, small groups and a whole class. This strategy is also suitable for any proficiency level.

## Strategy 2. Extensive Reading

### Objective

Develop and implement autonomous learning and critical thinking skills for English language reading competencies

### Description

#### The Importance of Choice: Leveled Readers

One key principle outlined by Ng et al. (2019) explains how extensive reading allows students to choose their own reading material. To accommodate varying proficiency levels and age groups, teachers can introduce leveled readers. Leveled readers are books categorized by difficulty, ranging from beginner to advanced. By offering a range of options, teachers ensure that every student can find a book that suits their language abilities and interests. This approach not only motivates students, but also boosts comprehension and fluency through intensive reading.

Here you can find a link where you can download texts. The link below is a constantly evolving search engine where you can find PDFs about various topics including pdfs of graded readers. This search engine is called [PDF drive](#).

#### Guided and Autonomous Activities in Extensive Reading

##### *Group Dynamics*

To encourage interaction and discussion, consider having students choose books in small groups. This enables them to share their thoughts, ask questions, and exchange ideas throughout the semester. Group discussions can be guided by the teacher initially but should gradually transition to student-led conversations, promoting autonomy and critical thinking. Encourage students to choose their groups based on their English language level and interests to maximize their learning process.

##### *Pre-reading*

A guided activity in class prior to beginning the reading process is important to engage students in the reading process and enhance comprehension. An example of this type of activity could be a prediction activity to encourage students to make predictions about the story's content. This fosters curiosity and encourages students to actively seek answers while reading. After completing the text, revisit their predictions to assess accuracy and deepen understanding through in-class discussions and presentations.

##### *Vocabulary journals*

Vocabulary acquisition is also crucial for language development. Encourage students to maintain vocabulary journals while reading extensively. They can record unfamiliar words, parts of speech, their meanings, and example sentences. This practice helps students expand their lexical repertoire, leading to improved reading comprehension and overall language proficiency. Vocabulary journals are completed outside of class while students are reading individually. Regular vocabulary quizzes and/or activities can reinforce these new words, allowing students to increase their general language competencies, and these can be completed in class as a guided activity.

**Table 1. Example of vocabulary journal template**

Extensive Reading vocabulary journal    Name of reader \_\_\_\_\_ Your name \_\_\_\_\_ Parallel \_\_\_\_\_

Word	Part of speech	Definition	Authentic example from reader	Your example sentence

Source: own elaboration

**Story Maps**

Story maps are visual representations of a narrative’s key elements, such as characters, settings, plot, and main events. They provide students with a clear framework for understanding the structure of the text. Students can create their own story maps to reflect on the material and demonstrate comprehension. This visual aid enhances critical thinking skills and encourages students to engage deeply with the text. This also helps students gain a deeper understanding of the text and organize the ideas they are reading. Normally, this activity can be completed after students have read half of the book. This can be completed in groups outside of class or in class as a guided activity.

**Figure 1. Example of the story map template:**

Story Map		
Characters - Who		Setting – When & Where
Problem		
Event	Event	Event
Solution		

Source: own elaboration

## Final Projects: Book in Bag or Role Plays

Kaff et al. (2015) describe how book in bag projects can increase reading motivation and comprehension for many different types of students. To promote critical thinking and the application of language skills, incorporate final projects into the extensive reading strategy. Book in Bag presentations involve students selecting a book, summarizing it, and creatively presenting it to the class. This activity encourages public speaking and enhances comprehension.

Role plays are another example of an engaging final project option. Students can act out scenes or create new dialogues based on the characters and situations in their chosen books. Students can recreate the ending of the story and act out their own ideas. These final projects not only reinforce language skills but also foster creativity and collaboration.

## Duration and Flexibility

The duration of the extensive reading strategy can vary based on the teacher's lesson plan and available time. It can span anywhere from one month to four months or longer. As the professor of the course, I found that flexibility is key to adapting the strategy to the specific needs and goals of the class. As teachers we should monitor students' progress and adjust the pace accordingly.

## Strategy 3. Reading Circles

### Objectives

Motivate students to read and work collaboratively inside and outside the classroom  
Improve reading comprehension and vocabulary for English language competencies

### Description

The process of Literature Circle is detailed as follows (AbdelFattah et al., 2020):

#### Role Selection

Students are asked to choose a role that fits in with their interests and skills at the beginning of each Literature Circles session. Students are able to customize their reading experiences through this self-selection method.

#### Independent Reading

After choosing their reading material, students go home to begin their reading adventure. Their main goal is to read the material slowly and carefully, going over it several times until they have a profound understanding of its content. During this phase, comprehensive notes are taken on pivotal events, significant dates, notable characters, and challenging vocabulary.

#### Note Sharing and Teacher Guidance

When the students return to the classroom, the notes they took are examined, and crucial direction and explanation are given. This interactive phase intends to address any queries that may have arisen during independent reading.

#### Small Group Formation

Students are arranged into smaller, more personal circles, usually with four to five people. In these supportive groups, each student undertakes one of the defined roles, including but not limited to Discussion Leader, Vocabulary Wizard, Summarizer, Connector, and Illustrator.

#### Role Responsibilities

Each role has a unique set of responsibilities that foster a thorough comprehension of the text and promote collaborative learning:

- **Discussion Leaders** ensure that every member of the group actively participates in the conversations by crafting thought-provoking, open-ended questions.
- **Vocabulary Wizards** help their classmates in learning challenging words from the text, focusing on pronunciation and meaning.
- **Summarizers** are in charge of summarizing the text by including the most important ideas from it.

- **Connectors** are adept at creating connections between the text and themselves or the larger environment, which improves understanding and encourages critical thinking.
- **Illustrators** enhance visualization and interpretation by using their artistic abilities to bring textual situations to life.

Here you can find two links where you can download role cards for lower, middle-upper and upper school levels and a role assessment rubric:

- [Link 1](#)
- [Link 2](#)

### Presentation and Discussion

The chance for each group member to share their work with the group promotes lively debates. A greater knowledge of the content is attained while practicing public speaking during this presenting phase, which lasts between five and seven minutes per participant.

### Applications and Examples

The flipped learning approach can be combined with reading circles satisfactorily. Firstly, to save time, the students may read the material in advance several times at home to grasp the main idea of the text. This additional preparation gives the students the chance to engage more deeply with their assigned roles in class fostering increased confidence and active participation during discussions. Secondly, students develop autonomy in their learning process. They gradually and unconsciously cultivate a reading habit and enhance their love for reading.

The incorporation of collaborative learning is essential for the success of this strategy. For better results, it is advisable to organize students into small groups of 3 to 5 students. Each student actively participates in the group and collaborates effectively to achieve high-quality work. Additionally, their inhibitions decrease as they gain confidence in expressing their ideas and opinions in front of their peers rather than solely in front of their teacher.

Higher-order thinking skills are developed through the implementation of reading circles. In each role that students have selected, they are tasked with engaging and challenging activities that push them out of their comfort zones, encouraging deep thinking to successfully complete their assigned tasks.

Reading circles develop students' four language skills. This activity offers a real context for students to practice and improve their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

Encouraging free selection of reading material is crucial for motivating English students to engage with a foreign or second language. Therefore, teachers have to seek out authentic material that aligns with students' interests and proficiency levels and let them select the topic they would like to read about. Certainly, allowing students to choose their own reading materials not only enhances motivation but also promotes ownership of the learning process.

The use of role sheets is highly beneficial during the implementation of reading circles. These role sheets not only assign specific tasks to each student but also provide clear instructions and expectations for their roles within the reading circles. They offer structured guidance and ensure that students understand their responsibilities, fostering accountability and active engagement.

Reading circles can be employed in diverse educational contexts to support language development and facilitate meaningful, genuine learning for students.

## Duration and Flexibility

The duration of the implementation will vary based on the length and complexity of the selected reading material. Teachers should develop a structured plan outlining the number of sessions required for students to complete the reading. For instance, with longer texts like novels or extended stories, multiple reading circle sessions may be needed to discuss each chapter thoroughly. Conversely, shorter texts, such as news, poems, short passages, or brief stories may require only one or two sessions for discussion and analysis.

Reading circles are versatile and can be applied at all levels of English proficiency including beginners, intermediate, and advanced learners of all ages. The main difference lies in the grade of reading difficulty selected by the teacher. Therefore, beginners might be engaged with simplified texts, and intermediate and advanced learners can tackle more complex literary works, such as novels.

## Assessment

### LEA

The assessment plan for the LEA tracks students' progress in reading and writing through portfolio-based assessment to align teaching with their needs. Portfolios, combined with other tools like rubrics and student-generated texts, provide insights into vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Regular feedback ensures students stay informed about their progress, fostering a student-centered approach to learning.

### Extensive reading

Evaluation of this section is completed at the end of the strategy during the final assignment. Students are evaluated on their presentation and completion of the book in a bag project using a rubric.

### Reading circles

The Reading Circles strategy can be assessed through a summative assessment using a learning log, a systematic instrument that allows students to record their learning experiences, monitor their progress, and consider important insights. Therefore, after each session, students will complete a self-evaluation in which they are required to document their thoughts, important group peer contributions, and insightful observations in the learning log.

## Conclusion

The Language Experience Approach supports students in enhancing basic language skills and acquiring fundamental language knowledge, for instance, grammar and vocabulary knowledge. This strategy has proved to be effective since students create their own reading texts, which are at an appropriate level and prevents students from feeling stressed and frustrated.

Extensive reading allows students to choose their own texts using leveled readers, incorporating prediction activities, vocabulary journals, and story maps, culminating in engaging final projects, not only promoting critical thinking, but also nurturing autonomous learning skills. By harnessing the power of extensive reading, EFL teachers can empower their students to become confident and proficient English language users at various levels and ages.

Finally, reading circles can be perceived as an educational revolution since they transform the approach to teaching reading and comprehension. This method empowers students, shifting them from passive readers to active learners and from hesitant speakers to confident communicators. It also fosters collaboration among students. However, the most enduring change is the foundation it establishes for a lifetime of reading and learning, extending beyond the classroom. This approach emphasizes not only teaching literature but also nurturing a lifelong love for reading.



# Chapter 4. Boosting Speaking Skills through WordWall Games

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## Introduction

Based on the experience of this chapter's authors, some difficulties have been identified throughout our years of teaching practice. In order to communicate efficiently and become fluent English speakers, language learners must develop their speaking abilities. Nevertheless, many students find it difficult to become more confident, motivated, and fluent during English lessons. This skill is crucial for effective English communication, as it empowers learners to express themselves, understand others, and actively participate in different settings (Boonkit, 2010).

We have identified typical issues that EFL students run across when trying to improve their speaking abilities. Among these difficulties are a lack of confidence and nervousness while speaking English, particularly when doing so in front of other people because of a fear of looking foolish or drawing criticism. Furthermore, pupils may struggle to communicate their ideas and thoughts clearly due to a lack of vocabulary and fluency, which causes hesitation and frequent pauses. Additionally, in certain EFL environments, students may not receive enough exposure and practice, and the lack of sufficient interaction activities may hinder their ability to develop as speakers. There are other difficulties EFL students face when developing speaking skills. These include problems with pronunciation, lack of motivations, and they don't see the relevance or practical applications of English in their lives. Besides, without proper feedback, students may reinforce incorrect pronunciation, grammar, and conversational patterns, hindering progress.

In this chapter, creative games for enhancing students' oral production with the use of WordWall, a digital tool, are presented. We have tested some of the features that this tool possesses during our speaking lessons and we have found that the strategies and activities presented in the chapter align with successful practices in English teaching, as well as linguistic and pedagogical principles.

Teachers can create interactive games and exercises with WordWall to encourage student participation and language use during the activities. Its adaptable features turn conventional speaking activities into enjoyable ones. Students need to have a computer or cellphone and an internet connection. WordWall tracks students' progress and provides immediate feedback while promoting both individual and group learning.

This chapter provides helpful examples and step-by-step instructions for integrating WordWall into speaking. The main objective is to showcase the innovative ways in which WordWall might be implemented to provide students with additional chances to practice their English in a fun and relaxed environment. Ultimately, WordWall's features allow teachers to customize the activities according to the student's needs and lesson objectives and encourage students' confidence and willingness to use spoken English.

## Literature Review

The WordWall activities presented in this chapter are directly linked to the research project on "Successful practices in English teaching and linguistic and pedagogical formation of pre-service English teachers at UNAE" since the research project aimed to identify the most successful practices being implemented in English lessons at UNAE, both to learn from each other and improve our own teaching practice, as well as to disseminate these practices to the wider ELT community. The WordWall activities were identified as successful practices through classroom observations as part of the action research process. This tool and its various interactive games, such as the Random Wheel, Open the Box, Balloon Pop, and Gameshow Quiz, were found to be effective in enhancing students' speaking skills, engagement, and motivation in EFL classrooms. By including these WordWall activities in the book, the authors are

disseminating a successful practice they identified through their research project, contributing to the broader goal of sharing effective strategies for English language teaching and the pedagogical formation of pre-service English teachers at UNAE.

Recently, there has been a lot of interest in the application of gamification in education since it offers a way to exploit games' motivational potential for learning. According to Contreras & Eguia (2016) gamification can play a crucial role in enhancing the learning experience and it can potentially improve students' motivation, engagement, and overall performance in higher education settings.

In this context, English teaching research is a crucial component in the ongoing improvement of language instruction (Bayyurt, 2006). In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the use of ICTs in English language teaching. This has come with numerous benefits, including improved vocabulary, reading, and speaking skills for learners. Teachers play a crucial role in adapting to these technological advancements and using them as tools to facilitate effective language instruction. In the research work carried out by Hernández et al., (2021) about the effectiveness of communication games in improving the English speaking skills of tenth graders at a public high school in Ambato, Ecuador, they surveyed 145 students to gauge their perception of communication games in the EFL classroom. The findings revealed that students appreciated using games for learning. More importantly, the study showed that communication games significantly improved the students' oral production. This improvement included a wider vocabulary range, greater accuracy and fluency, and a more relaxed interaction with classmates and the teacher.

Among the ICT tools which are popular among educators is the use of WordWall. There are some studies which show significant findings related to the implementation of this tool in class while there are others which show its limitations. In the study carried out by Rodríguez-Escobar et al., (2023) it was researched the use of WordWall to teach vocabulary to high school EFL learners. Pre-service teachers were interviewed to understand their perceptions of Wordwall. The results showed that Wordwall is a valuable resource for teaching vocabulary. The participants liked its interactive nature, which made learning more dynamic and engaging for students. Wordwall also promoted active participation, collaboration, and positive competition among students. Some concerns were raised about accessibility (limited free features) and reliance on internet connectivity. Additionally, some teachers felt the scoring system in certain activities could negatively impact student motivation. Among the perceptions regarding the benefits of WordWall, it was seen as effective in improving vocabulary acquisition and fostering a more positive learning environment. It considers different learning styles and offers opportunities for gamified learning and peer feedback. In fact, WordWall offers a fun and interactive way to learn vocabulary, It increases student participation and engagement, and the tool can be used for collaborative learning and peer feedback.

In another case, a usability study evaluated an online learning tool combining Google Sites and WordWall for teaching basic integration. While most students found the tool easy to use, fun, and engaging, some using mobile phones encountered difficulties. Debriefing interviews revealed issues with button visibility, unclear instructions, and mobile device compatibility. The study suggests modifications like improved font size, navigation, and mobile compatibility for a wider audience. Overall, the tool showed promise for online learning but highlights the need to consider factors like device availability and internet connectivity that can impact success (Bueno et al., 2022).

Subsequently, a study investigated the effectiveness of using WordWall to improve students' speaking skills. Before the intervention, students took a pretest where their scores ranged from 24 to 60, with an average score significantly below the passing mark. Following the Wordwall game treatment, students participated in a post-test using the same format. The results were significantly better, with scores ranging from 36 to 84 and an average score exceeding the passing mark. Statistical analysis confirmed these findings, demonstrating a significant improvement in students' oral English

proficiency after using Wordwall. The researchers suggest that Wordwall games encourage students to gather their thoughts and expand their vocabulary, leading to more confident and articulate speaking. They recommend incorporating Wordwall games into lesson plans and using this approach in different subjects and settings (Umairah & Agustina 2023).

In conclusion, educators and students present a mixed bag of benefits and limitations about the use of WordWall. Studies like Rodríguez-Escobar et al. (2023) highlight its success in promoting vocabulary acquisition and student engagement through its interactive and game-based approach. However, concerns exist regarding accessibility (limited free features) and reliance on internet connectivity. Additionally, some scoring systems might discourage students. Further research by Bueno et al. (2022) underscores the need for wider compatibility. While combining WordWall with Google Sites showed promise for online learning, students using mobile phones faced difficulties due to button visibility and unclear instructions. This emphasizes the importance of optimizing learning tools for various devices. On a brighter note, Umairah & Agustina (2023) demonstrated WordWall's effectiveness in improving students' speaking skills. Scores significantly increased after using WordWall games, suggesting the platform encourages students to organize their thoughts and expand vocabulary, leading to more confident speaking. These findings support incorporating WordWall into lesson plans for various subjects and settings.

WordWall offers a valuable yet evolving tool for educators. While it fosters engagement and improves learning outcomes, addressing accessibility concerns and ensuring wider device compatibility are crucial for maximizing its potential.

## Strategy 1. Spinning Conversation with the Random Wheel

WordWall's Random Wheel game provides an engaging and effective way for EFL teachers to give students more opportunities to practice and improve their speaking skills. The game's spinning wheel mechanism brings an element of surprise and playfulness to speaking activities (Osman & Rabu, 2020).

In this regard, Fu'adi (2017) states that the random wheel could be implemented using a wide variety of prompts, questions, vocabulary words, sentence starters, and discussion topics tailored specifically to boost students' speaking skills. When the wheel is spun, students are pushed to come up with responses and discussion points spontaneously, building critical skills in fluency and reflexive speech. According to Fu'adi (2017), the Wheel Conversation Game provides an engaging way for students to practice speaking, leading to improved communication abilities. Teachers can incorporate such interactive activities to help students achieve language learning indicators and become proficient English users.

A study by Rodríguez-Escobar et al. (2023) explored the perceptions of Chilean pre-service EFL teachers regarding Wordwall.net. The participants found Wordwall to be highly beneficial since they appreciated its usability, visual appeal, and feedback features beyond traditional methods. The study highlights Wordwall as an innovative approach that offers an engaging and effective way to enhance vocabulary acquisition and speaking skills in EFL contexts. Its user-friendly interface and interactive features make it a valuable tool for both teachers and learners. Researchers recommend its incorporation into language classrooms to promote natural dialogues and spontaneous responses during speaking activities.

All in all, the Random Wheel game gives students low-pressure practice in constructing sentences and voicing opinions quickly. Its randomized nature keeps students alert, as they cannot rely on pre-planned responses. Pair and group activities with the wheel provide peer modeling and learning through natural dialogues. Ultimately, incorporating WordWall's Random Wheel game into EFL lessons motivates students to improve their speaking abilities by challenging them to use English creatively in unscripted situations.

Here are some examples with the Random Wheel game that Matute and Rodas (2023) suggest including in your lesson plans.

## Activity 1. Describe It!

### Objective

To expand their understanding of recently learned vocabulary words by creating detailed descriptions and using synonyms or constructing contextually relevant examples, all in a collaborative and engaging partner activity.

**Level:** Elementary-Middle School

This activity is suitable for a variety of ages, but it can be most effective for students from upper elementary grades (around ages 9-11) to middle school (ages 12-14) since this age group is developing stronger vocabulary skills and their ability to explain concepts using synonyms and examples. Likewise, the attention span is higher. The paired activity format keeps students engaged and motivated. Younger children might struggle to maintain focus for the entire activity.

### Description of Steps

- 1. Preparation:** Create a vocabulary wheel or use a pre-made one with words students have recently learned. Decide whether you'll do a collaborative description or guessing game variation.
- 2. Partner Up:** Have students form pairs.
- 3. Spin the Wheel:** Each student takes turns spinning the wheel.
- 4. Description Round:** If playing the collaborative description round, the student whose turn it is looks at the word landed on. Without saying the word itself, they describe it in detail using synonyms or creating contextually relevant examples. Encourage them to use descriptive language (e.g., "It's something tall that touches the clouds" for skyscraper). Their partner listens closely and tries to guess the word based on the description. If the partner guesses correctly, they get a point (optional). If not, the student describing can offer additional clues or reveal a single letter.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 with partners taking turns.
- 6. Wrap-Up:** After a set number of rounds, discuss the activity as a class. Ask students which words were easy or difficult to describe. Encourage them to share creative descriptions or interesting examples they used.

### Resources

1. Vocabulary wheel with recently learned words (e.g., microphone, skyscraper, beach)
2. Paper and pencils (optional, for taking notes)
3. WordWall website (<https://wordwall.net/>)
4. Cellphone, Laptop or projector

## Activity 2. Would You Rather? Game

### Objective

To develop students' ability to express opinions clearly and justify their choices with reasons.

**Level:** Elementary-Middle school

### Description of Steps

1. **Preparation:** The teacher creates a pre-made wheel with relevant questions.
2. **Partner Up:** Have students form pairs or groups.
3. **Spin the Wheel:** Each student takes a turn spinning the vocabulary wheel. The student whose turn it is reads the “Would You Rather” question aloud. They state their clear preference (e.g., “I would rather live in the city...”).
4. **Explain the Why:** Encourage them to explain their reasoning in detail. This could involve highlighting the pros and cons of each option, sharing personal experiences or preferences using examples or evidence to support their choice.
5. **Active Listening:** The partner listens attentively to the explanation. They can ask clarifying questions to fully understand the other’s perspective.
6. **Switch roles:** The other student spins the wheel, shares their preference for the new question, and explains their reasoning.
7. Repeat step 3 and 4.
8. **Wrap-Up Discussion:** After a set number of rounds, have a class discussion. Ask students to share interesting or challenging questions they encountered. Encourage them to reflect on the different perspectives they heard from their partner.

### Resources

1. Vocabulary wheel with “Would You Rather” questions (e.g., “Would you rather live in the city or the countryside?”, “Would you rather eat pizza or hamburgers?”)
2. Paper and pencils (optional, for taking notes)
3. WordWall website (<https://wordwall.net/>)
4. Cellphone, Laptop or projector

## Strategy 2. Open the Box

The Open the Box feature in WordWall offers a dynamic and engaging game that provides a novel approach to enhance EFL learners' fluency, and overall speaking skills. In this section the authors will provide a comprehensive explanation of the Open the Box feature, its characteristics, functionalities, and potential applications in EFL speaking instruction as well as step-by-step guidelines and practical examples to demonstrate how teachers can effectively integrate this game into their lesson plans to create engaging and dynamic speaking activities that promote fluency and self-assessment.

Word Wall's Open the Box feature allows teachers to create interactive activities where students unlock boxes to reveal hidden content by matching target words, sounds, or phrases. As learners click on the boxes, the hidden content is revealed, prompting them to respond spontaneously and engage in conversations (Wordwall, 2006).

The feature's mechanics are designed to encourage quick thinking, spontaneous review, and natural conversational flow. Regarding the main characteristics of this tool, the Open the Box transforms passive learning into an active experience, drawing learners into problem-solving situations and fostering an energetic sense of participation. In addition, the feature's flexibility allows teachers to modify the content of the boxes to align with specific lesson objectives, adapting the learning experience to the needs and interests of their students. Its adaptability accommodates different learning styles from visual, auditory, etc. to kinesthetic learners. It is suitable for a wide range of EFL speaking contexts, from beginner-level classes to advanced conversational practice (Hasram et al., 2021).

Among other potential uses of this game, it presents a self-assessment element that encourages learners to monitor their own progress, identifying areas for improvement, and developing strategies for self-directed learning. This feature allows various topics, for instance vocabulary expansion, grammatical practice, pronunciation exercises, and reading comprehension tasks. Lastly, it promotes a sense of accomplishment, which is motivating for students because it reinforces positive learning experiences (Wordwall, 2006).

## Activity 1. Vocabulary Enhancement through Word Association

### Objective

To Enhance Fluency through Vocabulary Exploration. The Open the Box activity focuses more on vocabulary enhancement since brainstorming related words can contribute to fluency by expanding vocabulary and potentially improving word recall for instance reading words quickly and accurately without stumbling or decoding effort, and reading with appropriate rhythm, intonation, and phrasing to convey meaning and engage the listener.

### Age

This activity is suitable for students around ages 9-11 to high school students from 14-18 since these groups are actively building their vocabulary, they can also understand the connection between vocabulary and fluency in speaking.

**Level:** Upper elementary

### Description of Steps

- 1. Preparation:** Log in to your Wordwall account and create a new Open the Box game. Enter the new vocabulary set related to your lesson topic as the words to be revealed. You can add images or short definitions to each vocabulary word for additional context (optional). Set the game options (if desired) like number of tries, time limit per word (optional), and scoring system (optional).
- 2. Partner up:** Divide students into pairs or small groups for collaborative brainstorming.
- 3. Game play:** Project the Wordwall game on a screen or share the link with students on their devices. Ensure everyone can access the game. Explain students to take turns playing the Open the Box game, revealing vocabulary words one at a time and brainstorming as many related words as possible within the time limit (if set). The entire group brainstorms related words to the revealed vocabulary word. Encourage synonyms, antonyms, words from the same category, or words that share a connection to the vocabulary word. Students can write down their brainstormed words on a separate sheet of paper for reference.
- 4. Continue Playing:** Students take turns playing the Wordwall game, revealing new vocabulary words each round. Monitor student engagement and adjust the time limit or difficulty if needed.
- 5. Wrap-Up Discussion:** Conclude with a brief class discussion. You can ask, what were some interesting connections you made between words? Did you encounter any unfamiliar vocabulary words? How can a strong vocabulary help with reading fluency?

### Resources

1. Vocabulary cards (pre-selected based on lesson topic)
2. WordWall website (<https://wordwall.net/>)
3. Computer or device with internet connection.
4. Timer (optional)

## Activity 2. Fluency Development through Dialogue Creation

### Objective

To reinforce conversational fluency through prompted dialogues in a collaborative dialogue activity using the Open the Box format.

### Level

Elementary-Middle School

### Steps

- 1. Preparation:** Introduce a specific setting or topic for the upcoming dialogue (e.g., a restaurant, ordering food, asking for directions, discussing a movie). Briefly explain the context and any relevant background information to guide the conversation.
- 2. Forming Groups:** Divide students into pairs or small groups for collaborative dialogue practice.
- 3. Open the Box Preparation:** Ensure students have access to the Open the Box game with dialogue prompts.
- 4. Gameplay:** Students will take turns playing Open the Box and revealing dialogue starters or prompts related to the chosen setting/topic. Each time a prompt is revealed, students in the group will take turns continuing the dialogue naturally, using appropriate and fluent language. Encourage them to think creatively, respond to each other's cues, and build a cohesive conversation based on the prompts.
- 5. Self-Assessment and Reflection (optional):** Introduce the optional element of self-assessment. Motivate students to record themselves engaging in the dialogue using their phones, tablets, or other recording devices. After completing the dialogue prompted by several boxes, students can listen back to their recording. Encourage students to identify areas where they can improve their speaking fluency. This could involve aspects like:
  - › Pacing and flow of speech
  - › Use of filler words (“um,” “like”)
  - › Clarity of pronunciation and enunciation
  - › Responding effectively to partner cues
- 6. Wrap-Up Discussion:** Conclude the activity with a brief class discussion. You can ask students: What were some interesting conversation starters you encountered? How did self-assessment help you identify areas for improvement? What strategies can you use to enhance your conversational fluency?

### Resources

1. Open the Box game with dialogue starters or conversation prompts written on individual boxes (pre-made or student-created)
2. WordWall website (<https://wordwall.net/>)
3. Computer or device with internet connection.

### Strategy 3. Balloon pop

The Balloon Pop feature within WordWall enhances engagement and motivation for the practice of speaking skills in EFL lessons owing to its gamified elements (Ortiz-Colón et al., 2018). This interactive game allows teachers to introduce a new topic, facilitate controlled practice, or reinforce the focal point of a lesson. Consequently, this section endeavors to explore the potential features of the Balloon Pop game in EFL classrooms.

Balloon Pop on WordWall is a fun and interactive tool designed to engage students in learning. It allows teachers to create customized questions according to the lesson objective and track student progress. This game is built on the elements, mechanics, and components of gamification (Ortiz-Colón et al., 2018). The game awards points for each correct answer and takes the students through different levels of difficulty motivating them to actively participate and strive for higher scores. Depending on the settings chosen by the teacher, the students may have a limited number of attempts to play the game, encouraging them to focus on accuracy. According to different studies, the use of gamified activities increases students' motivation and promotes language production (Wulantari et al., 2023). Teachers can either use pre-designed games or customize them to fit the specific topic and objective, enabling a personalized approach tailored to the lesson's learning outcomes. The game allows progress tracking; both teachers and students can monitor their achievements providing valuable insights into the progress and comprehension of content. Balloon Pop enables teachers to take a creative approach to speaking lessons or any other language point.

EFL speaking practice is stimulated and student participation is boosted by Balloon Pop's adaptability and interactivity by offering students hands-on experience with vocabulary and pronunciation. It also encourages students to actively use target language structures and conversational flow during gameplay. This game can be used to make language learning experiences more enjoyable and successful.

## Activity 1. Vocabulary review/Collaborative work

### Objective

To review previously covered vocabulary in a fun and interactive way while promoting collaborative work and speaking skills.

**Level:** Elementary-High School

### Steps

1. Choose the vocabulary list you want students to review from a previous lesson.
2. Go to the WordWall website and create a new Balloon Pop game.
3. Enter the vocabulary words in one column and their corresponding definitions in the other column.
4. Customize the game settings, such as time limit, number of attempts, or scoring system.
5. Divide students into groups or teams.
6. Display the game on a projector or shared screen.
7. Students work together within their teams to match the vocabulary words with their definitions by popping the correct balloons before the time runs out.
8. Before popping a balloon, students should have a quick discussion with their team to agree on the correct match.
9. Award points for correct matches, and keep track of the team scores.
10. Students advance to the next level by earning points for correct responses.
11. At the end of the game, evaluate the results, provide feedback, and recognize the team with the highest score.

### Resources

1. WordWall website (<https://wordwall.net/>)
2. A list of target vocabulary words and their definitions or translations
3. Projector or shared screen
4. Equipment for dividing students into teams (e.g., colored cards, stickers, or other team identifiers)

## Activity 2. Functional language individual game

Balloon pop has versatility as an instructional tool to build speaking skills at different phases of a lesson and in several teaching modes: face-to-face, virtual, online, distance, etc. Balloon pop on WordWall provides a game-based approach to vocabulary, grammar, and language practice, and can be implemented for both individual or group work.

### Objective

To practice functional language expressions through an individual, self-paced, gamified activity.

**Level:** Elementary-Higher Education

### Steps

1. Identify the functional language expressions you want students to practice (e.g., asking for something, agreeing, making offers, requesting permission, or descriptions).
2. Go to the WordWall website and create a new Balloon Pop game.
3. In one column, enter the functional language expressions (e.g., “What would you like for lunch?”).
4. In the other column, enter the corresponding responses or matching expressions (e.g., “I’d like some salad”).
5. Customize the game settings, such as time limit, number of attempts, or scoring system.
6. Create a unique game link so the students can type their names.
7. Share the customized game link with the students.
8. Students access the game on their individual devices (phones, tablets, or computers) using the provided link.
9. Students play the game individually, matching the functional language expressions by popping the correct balloons into the corresponding train wagons.
10. Encourage students to focus on accuracy and self-paced practice.
11. After the game, access the results feature and export the scores or grades to an Excel file for evaluation.

### Resources

1. WordWall website (<https://wordwall.net/>)
2. A list of functional language expressions and their corresponding responses or matching expressions
3. Student devices (phones, tablets, or computers) for accessing the game
4. Excel or other spreadsheet software for recording and analyzing the results

## Strategy 4. The Gameshow

Students collaboratively or independently engage with the interactive features of the Gameshow Quiz on WordWall. When used as a group task, this game facilitates peer interaction and collaborative work to complete the game. When played independently, students are motivated to complete the game and earn recognition. This strategy aims to demonstrate how the Gameshow Quiz feature works and provide some examples of its usage.

The use of gamification promotes the development of metacognitive skills and skills that enable students to solve problems (López et al., 2022). The Gameshow Quiz on WordWall is an interactive way to transform traditional quizzes into an engaging and entertaining experience. This type of game asks multiple-choice questions and answering them requires more than just memorization: it also involves logic and active thinking. To find the right response, students must consider all available options and analyze them. Students are motivated to actively focus and thoroughly consider problems in order to obtain the correct answers by the competitive, game-like style. After students obtain immediate feedback on incorrect responses, it encourages them to reconsider their arguments and spot any holes or weaknesses in their reasoning. Additionally, the Gameshow Quiz provides an additional degree of difficulty that calls for critical thinking in a time-limited environment as opposed to aimless guesswork.

Teachers can design interesting interactive tests by utilizing the game show quiz function. They have an option to customize the quiz by adding their own questions and responses in different formats: written answers, images, or audios. The Gameshow Quiz opens with music and an entrance screen, much like a TV game show, for students to play through. The colourful multiple choice response selections underneath each question are given at once. To boost interest, sound effects play for both right and wrong answers and a scoreboard displays the progress that students make on the quiz. Additionally, the game includes a bonus round that spurs friendly competition by giving students the opportunity to win extra points. The Gameshow Quiz is an interactive way to test students' knowledge and speaking abilities.

### Activity 1. Discussing correct answers/Collaborative work

#### Objective

The Gameshow quiz and most of the games presented on WordWall can be adapted to target various language skills and competencies including grammar and vocabulary. In this particular instance, the aim is to assess students' comprehension of a story through a collaborative, gamified quiz activity that promotes active engagement, retention of information, and team collaboration.

**Level:** Elementary-Higher Education

#### Steps

1. Choose a story or text that has been previously presented to the students.
2. Go to the WordWall website and create a new Gameshow Quiz game.
3. In the first part of the game, add audio recordings of questions related to the story's content.
4. In the second part, type the potential answer choices for each question in a multiple-choice format.
5. Customize the game settings, such as the number of questions, time limits, or scoring system.
6. Divide the students into teams.

7. Display the Gameshow Quiz on a projector or shared screen.
8. Play the game, allowing teams to collaborate and discuss the correct answers for each question.
9. The first group providing the correct answer gets points or loses points if it is wrong
10. Encourage active participation, discussion, and collaboration within teams to determine the best answer.
11. Keep track of the team scores throughout the game.
12. Declare the winning team at the end of the game.

### Resources

1. WordWall website (<https://wordwall.net/>)
2. The story or text previously presented to the students
3. Audio recordings of questions related to the story
4. Projector or shared screen for displaying the game
5. Equipment for dividing students into teams

## Activity 2. Grammar practice/Individual work

### Objective

To provide individual practice and reinforce the use of simple past tense verbs through a gamified, timed fill-in-the-blank activity.

**Level:** Middle School-Higher Education

### Steps

1. Prepare a list of sentences with verbs in parentheses that need to be conjugated into the simple past tense.
2. Go to the WordWall website and create a new Gameshow Quiz game.
3. Enter the incomplete sentences as the questions, leaving blank spaces where the conjugated verb should be placed.
4. Provide the correct verb forms in the simple past tense as the answer choices for each question.
5. Customize the game settings, such as the time limit for each question, the number of questions, and the scoring system.
6. Customize the game link to be shared with the students.
7. Students access the game individually on their devices (phones, tablets, or computers).
8. Play the game show music to create a sense of urgency and excitement.
9. Students work independently to select the correct verb conjugation for each sentence within the allotted time.
10. Provide immediate feedback by marking incorrect responses.
11. Keep track of individual scores throughout the game.
12. Recognize the student with the highest score or most accurate answers at the end of the game.
13. Review and discuss any difficult verb conjugations or common errors with the class.

### Resources

1. WordWall website (<https://wordwall.net/>)
2. A list of sentences with verbs in parentheses that need to be conjugated into the simple past tense
3. Student devices (phones, tablets, or computers) for accessing the game
4. Game show music or sound effects (optional)

### Assessment

WordWall is a great tool for student assessment as mentioned in some of the previous descriptions.

In order to evaluate the activities themselves it is useful to keep in mind the following criteria:

- Assess how intuitive the user interface layout is for both teachers and students.
- Consider visual appeal and responsiveness on various devices.
- Check for different types of interactive tools offered (e.g., quizzes, word games).
- Evaluate whether these activities cater to diverse learning styles.
- Analyze feedback from students regarding their motivation levels when using WordWall.
- Consider elements like gamification features that enhance learning experiences.
- Review how easily educators can create tailored quizzes or modify existing templates.

- Assess options for themes, question types, and scoring systems.
- Evaluate if the platform provides adequate support resources (tutorials, FAQs).
- Check for accessibility features that accommodate all learners.

This assessment framework allows educators to systematically evaluate WordWall's effectiveness as an interactive learning tool based on essential educational criteria.

## **Conclusion**

Appropriate learning materials and gamified strategies can greatly benefit students who have difficulties with speaking skills. This chapter has provided meaningful perspectives on how to use WordWall to improve students' speaking skills. Overall, WordWall creates a supportive environment for building communication abilities in learners who struggle to gain confidence in speaking.

# Chapter 5. Maximizing Learning Opportunities: Innovative Telegram Activities

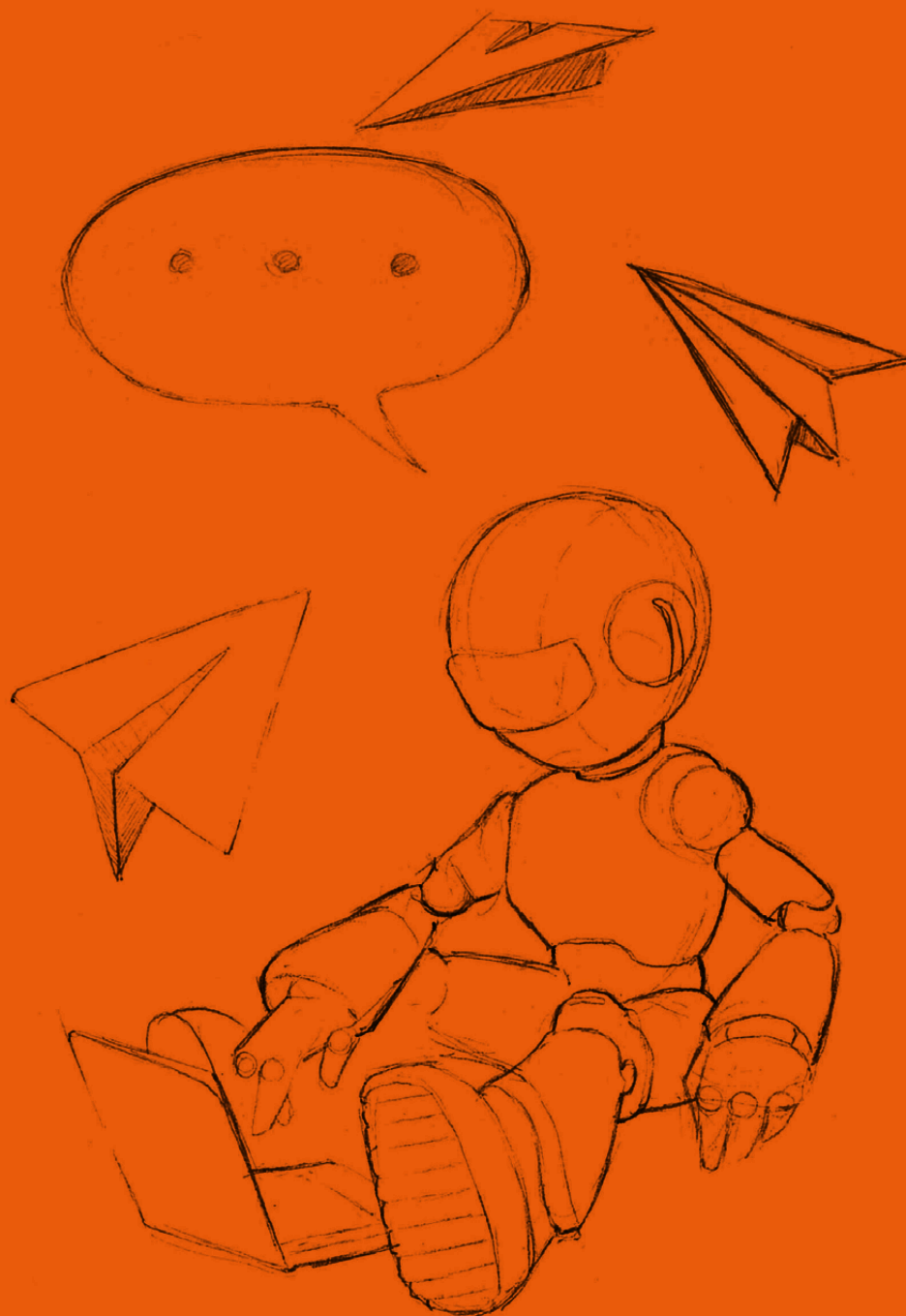
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High School





## Introduction

The primary goal of this book chapter is to ignite the spark of enthusiasm among lower-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, encouraging them to embrace English beyond the confines of the classroom. By introducing innovative strategies and activities, the chapter aims to cultivate a genuine desire among these learners to actively use English in their daily lives, whether through conversations, social interaction, or digital platforms.

Additionally, the chapter looks to foster meaningful and authentic engagement among EFL students by facilitating interactions with peers. Through carefully crafted activities, students will have the opportunity to apply their acquired knowledge of English in real-world scenarios. By demonstrating their language proficiency in practical contexts. By engaging in authentic communication with their peers, students can enhance their language skills while also building confidence in their ability to effectively express themselves in English.

Overall, by addressing these objectives, the chapter aims to empower lower-level EFL students to embrace English as a means of communication both inside and outside the classroom, ultimately facilitating their language learning journey and promoting a deeper understanding and appreciation of the English language.

The dynamic evolution of technology, along with the pervasive influence of social media platforms, has caused a paradigm shift in the field of language education. In this era of rapid change, educators are continually exploring inventive methods to captivate students and enrich their language learning opportunities. Among these innovative approaches, the integration of messaging applications such as Telegram stand out as a promising way to do this.

The current book chapter goes on a comprehensive exploration, showing a diverse collection of carefully crafted activities to use Telegram to its utmost potential within the English language learning context.

After a thorough literature review, theoretical framework, underpinned by an extensive synthesis of pertinent research, the chapter aims to explain the efficacy and rationale behind the proposed activities in order to offer educators valuable insights and strategies to optimize language learning experiences in the digital age.

## Literature Review

The activities presented in this book chapter are grounded in several key theories and approaches to language learning. Krashen's Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985) emphasizes the importance of comprehensible input for language acquisition, suggesting that learners should be exposed to language that is slightly above their current level of understanding. The interactive nature of the activities, such as Grammar Puzzles and Sentence Transformation, allows for the provision of comprehensible input through peer collaboration and teacher feedback.

Furthermore, the sociocultural theory of language learning (Vygotsky, 1978) highlights the role of social interaction in the development of language skills. The collaborative activities, such as Collaborative Story and Grammar Role-Play, create opportunities for students to engage in meaningful interactions and construct knowledge together. These activities align with the sociocultural perspective, which views language learning as a social process mediated by tools and symbols, including digital technologies like Telegram.

## Empirical Evidence

Recent studies have investigated the effectiveness of using Telegram and similar messaging applications in language learning contexts. Nur Aisyah et al. (2021) conducted a study on the use of Telegram to enhance English students' motivation in online learning. The researchers found that the integration of e-learning materials through Telegram significantly improved students' motivation, particularly in areas of interests, concerns, and needs. The activities presented in this book chapter, such as Daily News Summary and Podcast Club, aim to stimulate students' interests and address their learning needs, thereby increasing their motivation to engage in language learning.

Citrawati et al. (2021) conducted a systematic review examining the effectiveness of Telegram in enhancing students' English language skills, particularly in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. The review highlighted the potential of Telegram to support students in understanding, extracting information, and connecting new knowledge with prior understanding. The Reading Comprehension Questions and Book Club activities proposed in this chapter align with these findings, as they aim to reinforce reading comprehension skills and encourage thoughtful discussions among peers.

The effectiveness of Telegram in promoting interaction and self-directed learning has been emphasized by Haghghi et al. (2019). Their study investigated the impact of the flipped classroom model on EFL learners' appropriate use of refusal strategies, utilizing Telegram as an online platform. The results showed that the flipped classroom approach, facilitated through Telegram, enhanced students' language learning outcomes and engagement. The interactive and collaborative nature of the activities presented in this chapter, such as Grammar Role-Play and Collaborative Story, resonates with these findings, as they foster student engagement and self-directed learning.

Xodabande (2017) explored the effectiveness of using Telegram in teaching English language pronunciation to Iranian EFL learners. While the study focused specifically on pronunciation skills, it highlighted the potential of Telegram to support the development of oral communication skills. The Dictation Challenge and Short Video Analysis activities proposed in this chapter aim to enhance listening and speaking skills, aligning with the broader implications of Xodabande's research.

## Strategy 1. Grammar Activities

### Grammar Puzzles

#### Objective

To reinforce grammar skills, improve sentence structure, and expand vocabulary through daily grammar puzzles.

#### Steps

- The teacher creates a sentence with missing words and shares it in the Telegram chat of each pair of students.
- Students work together in pairs to complete the sentence with the correct grammar and appropriate words.
- Students submit their completed sentences in the chat.
- The teacher provides feedback and shares the correct answers with the class.

#### Resources

A list of grammar puzzles created by the teacher, covering various grammar points and vocabulary.

### Sentence Transformation

#### Objective

To enhance grammar understanding and practice sentence structure variations and grammatical transformations.

#### Steps

1. The teacher shares a sentence within the Telegram chat of each pair of students.
2. One student within the pair transforms the sentence into a different tense or form, for example: from simple present to simple past, or from a sentence to a question.
3. The other student compares the original sentence with the transformed one and provides feedback.
4. Students swap roles and repeat the process with a new sentence.
5. The teacher monitors the chats and provides additional feedback as necessary.

#### Resources

A set of sentences covering different tenses and grammatical structures.

### Optional resource

A peer-review guide checklist. This can include aspects like appropriate punctuation, vocabulary, etc. Depending on what the teacher wants to focus on.

## Grammar Challenges

### Objective

To encourage creative application of grammar structures and foster student engagement in meaningful grammar practice and peer interaction.

### Steps

1. The teacher assigns specific grammar points to each pair of students.
2. Within their Telegram chat, students collaborate and construct sentences using the assigned grammar points.
3. Students share their sentences with their partner for feedback and discussion.
4. The teacher reviews the chats and provides additional feedback and guidance as needed.

### Resources

A list of grammar points to be assigned to each pair of students.

## Grammar Role-Play

### Objective

To apply grammar concepts in practical, real-life scenarios while encouraging collaborative learning.

### Steps

1. The teacher assigns roles and grammar structures to each pair of students.
2. Within their Telegram chat, students engage in role-play conversations, applying the assigned grammar structures.
3. Students share their dialogues with their partner for feedback and discussion.
4. The teacher monitors the chats and provides additional feedback and guidance as necessary.

### Resources

A list of role-play scenarios and corresponding grammar structures.

## Strategy 2. Reading Activities

### Book Club

#### Objective

To enhance reading comprehension, critical thinking, and language skills while promoting peer engagement.

#### Steps

1. The teacher assigns pairs of students to read a chapter or specific portion of a book.
2. Students read the assigned reading and discuss it with their partner in their Telegram chat.
3. Students share their thoughts, questions, and reflections on the reading in their chat.
4. The teacher monitors the chats and provides additional questions or prompts to stimulate further discussion.

#### Resources

A selection of book chapters or excerpts appropriate for the students' level and interests.

### Reading Comprehension Questions

#### Objective

To reinforce reading comprehension skills and encourage thoughtful discussions among peers.

#### Steps

1. The teacher shares a short text with comprehension questions in the Telegram chat of each pair of students.
2. Students read the text and collaborate on answering the comprehension questions in their chat.
3. Students discuss their interpretations and share their responses with their partner.
4. The teacher reviews the chats and provides additional feedback and clarification as needed.

#### Resources

A collection of short texts with corresponding comprehension questions.

### Daily News Summary

#### Objective

To keep students informed about current events while enhancing their ability to summarize and discuss news articles.

### Steps

1. The teacher shares a current news article with each pair of students in their Telegram chat.
2. Students read the article and provide a brief summary or express their opinions in their chat.
3. Students engage in a discussion about the news article with their partner.
4. The teacher monitors the chats and provides additional questions or prompts to encourage further analysis and critical thinking.

### Resources

A selection of age-appropriate and level-appropriate news articles.

## Strategy 3. Writing Activities

### Daily Journaling

#### Objective

To encourage consistent writing practice, creativity, and constructive peer interactions.

#### Steps

1. The teacher assigns daily writing prompts to each pair of students.
2. Students respond to the prompts in their Telegram chat, creating a shared journal.
3. Students read and provide feedback on their partner's journal entries.
4. The teacher reviews the chats and provides additional feedback and guidance as necessary.

#### Resources

A list of varied and engaging writing prompts.

### Collaborative Story

#### Objective

To foster creativity, storytelling skills, and collaborative writing.

#### Steps

1. The teacher initiates a story within each pair's Telegram chat.
2. Students take turns adding a sentence or paragraph to the story, building the narrative collaboratively.
3. The teacher monitors the chats and provides guidance to ensure a cohesive and engaging story.
4. Once the story is complete, students review and discuss their collaborative work.

#### Resources

A collection of story starters or writing prompts to initiate the collaborative stories.

### Creative Writing Prompts

#### Objective

To nurture imaginative writing and peer interactions.

### Steps

1. The teacher shares creative writing prompts within each pair's Telegram chat.
2. Students respond to the prompts, creating short stories, poems, or descriptive paragraphs.
3. Students share their written creations with their partner for feedback and discussion.
4. The teacher reviews the chats and provides additional feedback and guidance as necessary.

### Resources

A list of creative writing prompts covering various genres and themes.

## Strategy 4. Listening Activities

### Podcast Club

#### Objective

To enhance listening comprehension and encourage discussions based on audio content.

#### Steps

1. The teacher shares links to English podcasts or audio clips with each pair of students in their Telegram chat.
2. Students listen to the content independently.
3. Students engage in a discussion about the podcast or audio clip, sharing their thoughts, opinions, and any new vocabulary encountered.
4. The teacher monitors the chats and provides additional questions or prompts to stimulate further discussion.

#### Resources

A curated list of age-appropriate and level-appropriate English podcasts or audio clips.

### Dictation Challenge

#### Objective

To enhance listening and transcription skills while promoting peer engagement.

#### Steps

1. The teacher records sentences or short passages and sends them to each pair of students in their Telegram chat.
2. Students listen to the recordings and transcribe the content individually.
3. Students compare their transcriptions with their partner and discuss any discrepancies or challenges.
4. The teacher reviews the chats and provides feedback on the accuracy of the transcriptions.

#### Resources

A set of pre-recorded sentences or short passages for dictation.

## Short Video Analysis

### Objective

To foster analytical skills and vocabulary expansion through engaging with short English-language videos.

### Steps

1. The teacher shares short English-language videos with each pair of students in their Telegram chat.
2. Students watch the videos independently.
3. Students analyze the content, discussing themes, new vocabulary, and any cultural aspects observed in the videos.
4. The teacher monitors the chats and provides additional questions or prompts to encourage deeper analysis and critical thinking.

### Resources

A collection of age-appropriate and level-appropriate short English-language videos.

## Assessment

### Activity Completion

- Teachers ask students to submit a screenshot of their complete task.
- Focus on overall task achievement rather than detailed correction

### Monthly Mini-Portfolio Sample

- Students select one example of their best work from the month.
- Students write one sentence explaining why they chose it.

### Conclusion

Since teachers always look to maximize learning opportunities and to foster a deeper understanding of the English language, the innovative Telegram activities presented in this chapter offer a diverse approach to language education. By addressing the primary objectives of igniting enthusiasm among lower-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students are cultivating authentic engagement through meaningful interactions, these activities provide a wonderful framework for language learning in the digital age.

Grounded in theoretical principles such as Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, the activities emphasize the importance of comprehensible input and social interaction in language acquisition. Furthermore, empirical evidence demonstrates the effectiveness of Telegram in enhancing motivation, language skills, and autonomous learning among EFL students, as demonstrated in recent studies.

From grammar puzzles to collaborative storytelling, from daily news summaries to podcast clubs, each activity is carefully designed to cater to the diverse needs and interests of learners while promoting

active participation and peer collaboration. By using the benefits of Telegram, teachers can create immersive learning experiences that transcend the boundaries of the traditional classroom, empowering students to embrace English as a means of communication in real-world contexts.

As teachers keep-up with the changes in language education, the integration of digital technologies like Telegram offer amazing opportunities for innovation and student engagement. By using these innovative approaches to their full potential, educators can inspire a new generation of language learners to appreciate English as a lifelong skill.



# Chapter 6. Formative Assessment with Quizizz. A Practical Guide to Engaging and Effective Assessment

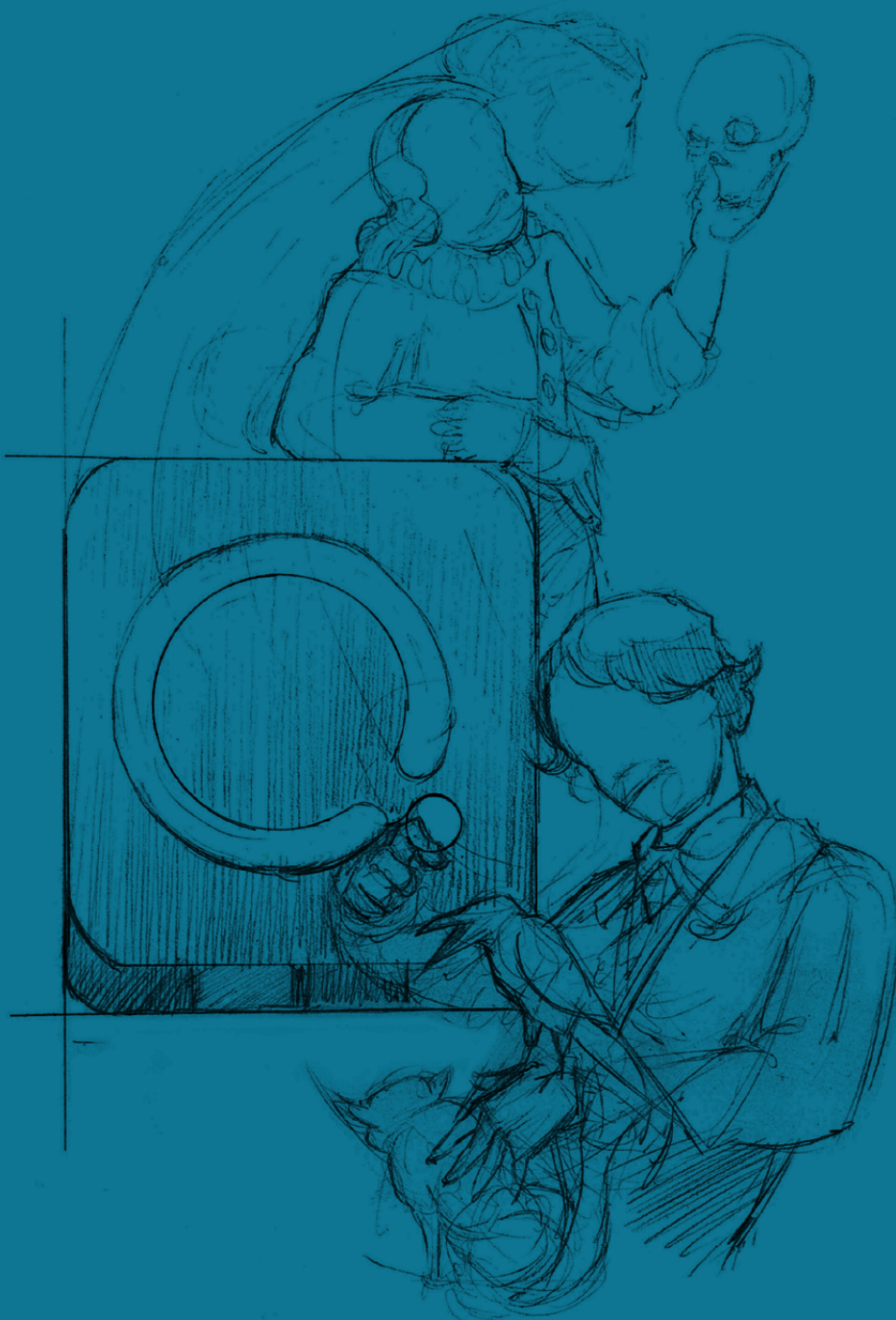
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High School-  
Higher  
Education





## Introduction

In traditional classrooms, formative assessment often involves written assignments, presentations, or in-class discussions (Torres, 2019). While these methods can effectively evaluate student learning, they can also be time-consuming for both instructors and students. Quizizz, an online quiz platform, offers an alternative approach to formative assessment that is engaging and efficient (Capiton, 2023).

This chapter delves into how Quizizz can be leveraged in English Language Learning and other subject matters taught in English. It emphasizes Quizizz's ability for instructors to create engaging quizzes that assess student comprehension of course material in real-time. As the research conducted by Zainuddin et al. (2020) suggests, these quizzes can be designed to encompass a broad spectrum of topics, from foundational concepts to intricate applications. By incorporating Quizizz into their classrooms, educators can expand their teaching repertoire by utilizing quizzes individually or in a collaborative setting.

We explore four strategies in which Quizizz can be used for formative assessment purposes these are the following: Assessing students' understanding of behaviorism, Using graphic organizers to summarize, How much do I remember? and finally, Reflective question cards.

## Literature Review

Quizizz emerges as an innovative tool for formative assessment, leveraging technology to enhance the evaluation experience for educators and students alike. Particularly suited for formative testing, teachers can readily access test reports to determine student performance after assessments (Perdana & Permatawati, 2019). Offering diverse features, Quizizz increases student engagement, satisfaction, and motivation (Chaiyo & Nokham, 2017). Incorporating elements such as leaderboards, avatars, and humorous memes, Quizizz fosters an interactive assessment environment, thereby stimulating student interest and active participation in the learning process (Zhao, 2019).

One of the key benefits of using Quizizz for formative assessment is that it provides students with immediate feedback on their performance (Permana & Permatawati, 2020). This feedback can help students identify areas of strength and weakness and motivate them to seek additional help if needed. At the beginning of a lecture, instructors can use Quizizz to assess students' prior knowledge of a topic. Then, this information can be used to provide immediate feedback and adapt the lecture to the needs of the students.

During a lecture, instructors can use Quizizz to check for understanding of key concepts. Interactive quizzes help students understand basic concepts on an ongoing basis (Daryanes & Sayuti, 2023). This can help to ensure that all students are keeping up with the material. For example, a true/false quiz could be used to assess students' comprehension of a specific theory or framework being discussed in the lecture. This proactive approach helps to maintain student engagement and retention, ensuring that all learners are actively participating and absorbing the material.

Through the use of the video response type of question, students can actively build their knowledge. One of Quizizz's features is video recording and analysis; students can contribute to a topic development by recording a video with their point of view, critical reflection, and contribution to it (Reich, 2007).

## General tips for using Quizizz

When designing Quizizz activities for formative assessment, it is important to consider the type, order, and number of questions to ensure that they effectively assess students' understanding of the material.

- **Type of Questions:** Utilize a variety of question types, such as multiple-choice, true/false, open-ended, matching, and image-based questions, to accommodate different learning styles and assess various aspects of student understanding.
- **Order of Questions:** Start with simpler, more basic questions to build confidence and engagement, gradually increasing the difficulty level to challenge students and assess deeper understanding.
- **Number of Questions:** The number of questions should be appropriate for the amount of material being assessed and the time allotted for the quiz. Aim for a balance that allows for comprehensive assessment without overwhelming students. A quiz is always short; therefore for formative assessment, it is recommended to use a maximum of ten questions.
- **Quizizz mode:** When it comes to applying the Quizizz activities to students, it is suggested to use the Instructor-led session; here you can find two options: Classic Mode and Instructor-paced mode. In the classic mode, students answer the questions at their pace and the instructor can see the results on a live dashboard, which allows them to keep track of the progress of each student and later provide immediate feedback on the questions/topics, students struggled the most with. Regarding the instructor-paced mode, the instructor can control the pace of the quiz/activity so all students advance through each question together; this mode allows the instructor to not only visualize the progress of each student but also to pause and provide additional explanations to students if needed.

## Strategy 1. Assessing students' understanding of a topic

### Objective

To assess students' understanding of a topic just covered in class

### Steps

The strategy used corresponds to a complete lesson. The teacher uses a PowerPoint Presentation to introduce a topic. While the teacher is presenting the lesson topic; first, she asks students to take notes of the content they consider most relevant; also, the teacher constantly asks students questions to monitor students' engagement and understanding of the content being presented. However, listening to the teacher's explanation can be tiring and boring; for that reason, to keep students' attention, at the beginning of the class, the teacher announces that they must take a quiz in the Quizizz platform to assess their active participation and note-taking ability. As the teacher has already planned her class, in advance, she prepares a 10-question quiz by following these steps:

1. First, the teacher logs in to her Quizizz account and clicks on "Create".
2. After that, the teacher has to choose what she/he would like to create. As the objective is to assess students, the teacher has to click on Quiz.
3. Then, from the options that Quizizz displays, the teacher must choose "Create from scratch".
4. To continue, the teacher must choose the type of questions for the test. It is always recommendable to include at least 10 questions in the test so students have more opportunities to practice and reinforce their knowledge. For this activity, the teacher works only with multiple-choice questions.
5. Next, the teacher starts working on the questions. The teacher creates 10 multiple-choice questions. It is advisable to include 4 options of answers per question (a, b, c, d).
6. When writing the questions, do not forget to click (choose) on the right answer; otherwise, Quizizz does not save the questions.
7. It is also necessary to check the time students have for each question and the points assigned to each question.
8. Now, the teacher is ready to give students the test. For this quiz, the teacher chooses the instructor-paced option. The teacher informs students about the relevance of clicking on "Submit" before they move to the next question; otherwise, the answers won't be counted.
9. Following, the teacher clicks on "continue".
10. Given the above, the teacher gives students time to join the Quizizz activity by providing a link and the enter game code.
11. Finally, students are ready to start the quiz.

One of the benefits of Quizizz is that students can check their answers immediately. Now, it is the students' responsibility to reflect on the wrong answers and work harder on the content they are not confident with yet.

## Strategy 2. Using graphic organizers to summarize

### Objective

To foster summarizing skills through the implementation of graphic organizers

### Steps

When reading the name of the subject Pedagogical Models, we could think it is exclusively a theoretical subject, where students only have to sit and listen to the teacher; nevertheless, the interest students could have in the subject content depends on how the teacher presents it and if students are given opportunities to contribute to their learning process.

In this context, the lesson regarding Cognitivism and Humanism seeks to discover new knowledge by reading.

1. First, the teacher makes groups to enhance cooperative learning; after, the teacher gives students a quick workshop about the use of the university library and how to search for books. Once students are familiar with the process of looking for and requesting books, they are given one week to visit the library and read at least two books where they can find the pedagogical models to be studied in the lesson.
2. Next, the teacher provides the template of the graphic organizer they have to use to summarize the information they read.
3. Following, the teacher makes groups of 4 students and asks them to share the information they have been able to find with the group members.
4. Finally, the teacher informs students that to close the lesson, they must complete a summative assessment by using the platform Quizizz as an alternative to measuring students' engagement and comprehension of the lesson topics.

The teacher uses the same steps explained in the first strategy, but now, some pictures are also included. How can pictures be included in the quiz?

1. Once you choose the type of question, you can click on the first icon on the top left side of the screen.
2. Then, Quizizz gives you the option to drag and drop the image directly from a website or file; or to upload it from your device (computer). Quizizz accepts .jpg, .png, or .gif formats.
3. After you have chosen the image, you can just click on "save".
4. Finally, you can visualize the image in the question.

**Tip:** It is better if you create a folder with all the images you will use for the quiz you are preparing and then upload them directly from your computer, as sometimes the images we find on the Internet do not have the required format.

At this point, you can decide on the test mode and start the Quizizz with your students.

## Strategy 3. How much do I remember?

### Objective

To encourage students to pay attention to their classmates' presentations and actively participate during the lesson.

### Steps

The lesson starts with the students' presentation about constructivism and social constructivism. After that, the teacher makes groups of four students and asks them to discuss for ten minutes the above-mentioned pedagogical models. The teacher also provides a graphic organizer (spider web, compare and contrast) template for students to classify their ideas. Next, students prepare their presentation in a construction paper, emphasizing the differences and similarities between constructivism and social constructivism. Students take turns to present their analysis in 5 minutes. Once, all the groups have presented, it is time for a quiz!

Planning is always the key to a successful lesson; for this reason, the teacher must make sure students know they will take a test after the discussion and the presentations.

Something different from the first and second strategies that we can recommend is to use matching and drag-and-drop questions. You can use these questions for vocabulary, grammar, concepts, etc.

Before moving to the next strategy; based on the experience we had during the teachers' workshop (activity developed as part of the research project), we would like to include one last thought.

The majority of the teachers have questioned the relevance of incorporating technological tools in their classrooms as they consider that effective and meaningful learning is possible without technology. But maybe we could set the bar a little higher and recognize the importance of technology in education. There are several understandable reasons why teachers would shy away from implementing new tech in their classrooms. Oftentimes, teachers have not been convinced of the usefulness of something new and think they will be on their own to put it to use. However, through training, support, and a positive attitude, these reasons will be obsolete, and growth will not only be achieved by students but by teachers as well (Arndt, 2021).

## Strategy 4. Reflective question cards

### Objectives

To foster reflective skills development through class discussion.

### Steps

Teaching “theory” can be complicated, especially when the classroom becomes teacher-centered. Then, how can we ensure students are understanding the definition, characteristics, history, and most relevant information related to pedagogical models? Will they be able to bring the theory into practice? One strategy, we can use is reflective question cards. And of course, the use of Quizizz make this activity (quiz) even more interesting and fun.

1. The teacher prepares the questions in advance. For example:
  - › In what ways does connectivism address the challenges caused by the rapid evolution of information and technology in the 21st century?
  - › In what ways can students be involved in shaping the learning environment to align with the principles of connectivism, intercultural pedagogy, and critical pedagogy?
  - › How does critical pedagogy contribute to empowering students to question, analyze, and challenge social norms and structures?
2. Once the questions are ready, teachers can start creating their Quizizz. For this specific strategy, it is recommended to choose the Video Response option.
3. The teacher can decide the length of the video; according to our experience, 2 minutes is more than enough. Nevertheless, teachers can decide how much time should the video last according to the student’s level.
4. You already know what comes next!

Just remember, the final goal of this lesson is to assess students in an innovative way through the use of Quizizz; nonetheless, the suggested strategy highlights the relevance of questioning and reflecting in the classrooms to promote higher order thinking skills, creativity, and to develop learning; while having fun!

**Time-saving hint:** Teachers usually say time is their worst enemy; as we have to not only teach our lessons, grade tasks, and implement technology in our classes; but also evaluate our students. Good news! Quizizz is the solution!

If you already have a text, like for example the theory about behaviorism, you just need to upload that file into Quizizz, and the platform will create the quiz for you. Do you want to know how?

1. Log into your Quizizz account and choose Quiz.
2. Next, select the option “upload a document”.
3. After that, click on “upload from device or import from Google Drive”. In the same window, you can decide how many questions do you need your quiz to have.
4. Following, you just have to click on “Generate Questions,” and your test will be ready in a couple of minutes.
5. Finally, here is your quiz.

## Assessment

All of the Quizizz activities are designed for students' assessment.

In terms of evaluating the quality of a quiz in Quizizz, teachers could use the following criteria:

- Questions are varied, engaging, and appropriately challenging. Includes multiple formats (MCQs, matching, videos).
- Questions progress logically from simple to complex, building engagement and understanding.
- The quiz includes the ideal number of questions (e.g., 8-10) for a balanced and comprehensive assessment.
- The selected mode (instructor-paced/classic) enhances participation and aligns perfectly with the lesson goals.
- Features Images, memes, or videos are effectively incorporated, adding clarity and enhancing student engagement.
- Students actively participate, reflect on their answers, and demonstrate enthusiasm for the quiz activities.
- Quiz content directly supports the lesson objectives and fosters skills like critical thinking
- Feedback is provided effectively, helping students understand mistakes and identify areas for improvement.

After each Quizizz activity, review the criteria above and evaluate its implementation based on your observations of student behavior and engagement. Adjust future quizzes by identifying areas for improvement (e.g., adding question variety or including visuals). Gather feedback from students to further refine your use of Quizizz.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has highlighted the multiple benefits of integrating Quizizz into formative assessment practices across various subject matters. By making use of technology, educators can enhance the evaluation experience for both themselves and their students while fostering a dynamic and engaging learning environment. Through immediate feedback mechanisms, Quizizz supports students in identifying areas for improvement, thereby promoting continuous growth and learning.

Furthermore, the versatility of Quizizz allows for the implementation of diverse assessment strategies, ranging from assessing understanding of key concepts to promoting reflective skills development through class discussions. As we navigate the ever-evolving landscape of education, it becomes increasingly apparent that technology, when thoughtfully integrated into pedagogical practices, has the potential to revolutionize teaching and learning. As educators continue to explore innovative approaches to assessment, platforms like Quizizz serve as invaluable tools in our quest to cultivate critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning skills in our students.



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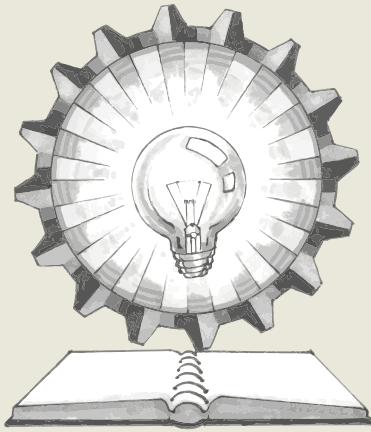
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The Pedagogical Manuals (**Cartillas Pedagógicas**) handbook includes practical and immediately applicable pedagogical works and experiences for educators at various academic levels. This collection is intended to receive proposals from both teachers and education researchers who are interested in suggesting innovative strategies and activities for the educational community.



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